**THE WORLD** / A21

## Queen Elizabeth has last laugh, tells Bush, 'When I was here in 1776'

**METRO** / A20

## Court of Appeals stops MMDA from removing MRT billboards

**NEWS** / A4

## 8 Filipinos freed unharmed in Nigeria, arrive today

**ACROSS** / A16

## Disqualification filed vs Lapid for lying about civil status

## Pols 'PIG-ging' out in North for 'baboy diplomacy'

HIGH BLOOD ANG KAPALIT N'YAN!

By Frank Cimatu
*Inquirer Northern Luzon*

STA. MARIA, ILOCOS Sur—The tastiest and cheapest "bagnet"—deep fried pork—used to be found here.

POLS/ A7

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Thursday, May 10, 2007 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 151 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

## Palace: Car plates stolen by men linked to Reds

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE CAR PLATES USED IN THE ABDUCTION OF Jonas Joseph Burgos, son of the late press icon Jose "Joe" Burgos, were stolen from an impounded vehicle at a military depot by "some troublemakers" when the Army was not looking, Malacañang said yesterday.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said this

PALACE/ A9

### TU'S FINAL PUSH

## 'All politics is local,' more so in vote-rich Mindanao

By Cynthia D. Balana
and Michael Lim Ubac

IN WHAT MAY WELL BE ONE OF THE CLOSEST of Senate races, Team Unity (TU) is banking on the pendulum to swing to its side as the election campaign enters the homestretch.

Despite surveys showing Genuine Opposition (GO) candidates at the forefront, TU campaign propagandists say the winners will be decided in areas where local candidates loyal to the Arroyo administration are running either unopposed or virtually unopposed, as in the vote-rich Mindanao.

"All politics is local," said reelectionist Zamboanga City Mayor Celso Lobregat, an opposition-turned-administration candidate.

"This is not a presidential election. These are

'ALL POLITICS/ A15

ELEKSYON 2007

**LAST FULL SHOW**

Team Unity stalwarts (from left) Tito Sotto, Mike Defensor and Ralph Recto get as good as it gets in the homestretch of their campaign for the Senate in Barangay Agdao, Davao City on Tuesday.

BING GONZALES/ INQUIRER MINDANAO

# SWS: It's 6-4-2 for GO

## Economy forgotten in campaign

By Daxim L. Lucas

FOOD ON EVERY HOUSEHOLD'S TABLE is a popular election promise in a country where almost a fifth of the population lives on less than $1 a day. But in the campaign for the 2007 midterm elections, economic issues have effectively been forgotten.

The absence of a real debate on business issues and the direction of the economy came about by design rather than by chance, according to Jaime Policarpio, a former political adviser of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Policarpio said the talking points for this year's political exercise had been dictated largely by opposition groups.

ECONOMY/ A7

**SENATORIAL VOTING PREFERENCES 2007**

| | May 2-4 Sure voters % | Rank (38 candidates) | May 2-4 Reg. voters % | Rank (38 candidates | April 14-17 Reg. voters % | Rank (38 candidates) | Mar 15-18 Reg. voters % | Rank (37 candidates) | Feb. 22-27 Reg. voters % | Rank (80 candidates) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LEGARDA | 59 | 1 | 58 | 1 | 58 | 1 | 58 | 1 | 54 | 2 |
| VILLAR | 46 | 2 | 46 | 2 | 45 | 2 | 57 | 2 | 52 | 3 |
| ESCUDERO | 44 | 3 | 43 | 3 | 41 | 3-4 | 40 | 5 | 36 | 7 |
| PANGILINAN | 42 | 4 | 41 | 4 | 39 | 5 | 48 | 3 | 57 | 1 |
| LACSON | 39 | 5 | 39 | 5 | 41 | 3-4 | 42 | 4 | 42 | 5 |
| AQUINO, B. | 37 | 6 | 36 | 6-7 | 28 | 11-13 | 28 | 10-11 | 30 | 9-10 |
| RECTO | 36 | 7 | 36 | 6-7 | 36 | 6 | 37 | 7 | 37 | 6 |
| CAYETANO, A. | 35 | 8 | 34 | 8 | 31 | 9 | 39 | 6 | 43 | 4 |
| ZUBIRI | 33 | 9-10 | 32 | 9-10 | 27 | 14 | 18 | 17 | 19 | 16-17 |
| HONASAN | 33 | 9-10 | 32 | 9-10 | 28 | 11-13 | 29 | 9 | 28 | 12 |
| ANGARA | 32 | 11 | 31 | 11-12 | 35 | 7 | 32 | 8 | 27 | 13-14 |
| ARROYO | 31 | 12 | 31 | 11-12 | 32 | 8 | 28 | 10-11 | 29 | 11 |
| SOTTO | 28 | 13 | 27 | 13 | 30 | 10 | 26 | 12-13 | 31 | 8 |
| PIMENTEL | 26 | 14 | 25 | 14 | 28 | 11-13 | 25 | 14 | 27 | 13-14 |
| DEFENSOR | 25 | 15-16 | 24 | 15-16 | 21 | 16-17 | 21 | 15 | 21 | 15 |
| TRILLANES | 25 | 15-16 | 24 | 15-16 | 14 | 21 | 13 | 21 | 12 | 23-24 |
| PICHAY | 24 | 17 | 23 | 17-19 | 20 | 18-19 | 16 | 20 | 13 | 22 |
| MONTANO | 23 | 18-19 | 23 | 17-19 | 21 | 16-17 | 17 | 18-19 | 16 | 18-19 |
| ROCO | 23 | 18-19 | 23 | 17-19 | 25 | 15 | 19 | 16 | 19 | 16-17 |
| MAGSAYSAY | 18 | 20-21 | 18 | 20-21 | 18 | 20 | 17 | 18-19 | 14 | 20 |
| OSMEÑA | 18 | 20-21 | 18 | 20-21 | 20 | 18-19 | 26 | 12-13 | 30 | 9-10 |
| ORETA | 13 | 22-23 | 13 | 22-23 | 10 | 24-25 | 10 | 22-23 | 12 | 23-24 |
| COSETENG | 13 | 22-23 | 13 | 22-23 | 11 | 22-23 | 9 | 24 | 13 | 21 |
| GOMEZ | 12 | 24 | 12 | 24 | 11 | 22-23 | 10 | 22-23 | 16 | 18-19 |
| SINGSON | 11 | 25 | 11 | 25 | 10 | 24-25 | 7 | 25 | 7 | 25 |
| KIRAM | 6 | 26 | 6 | 26 | 3 | 28-29 | 3 | 27-28 | 2 | 30-33 |
| CAYETANO, J. | 3 | 27-28 | 3 | 27-28 | 8 | 26 | 4 | 26 | 6 | 26 |
| CHAVEZ | 3 | 27-28 | 3 | 27-28 | 6 | 27 | 3 | 27-28 | 4 | 28 |
| BAUTISTA | 2 | 29-32 | 2 | 29-33 | 3 | 28-29 | 2 | 29-30 | 3 | 29 |
| AQUINO, T. | 2 | 29-32 | 2 | 29-33 | 2 | 30-33 | -- | | 2 | 30-33 |
| WOOD | 2 | 29-32 | 2 | 29-33 | 2 | 30-33 | 2 | 29-30 | 1 | 34-57 |
| PAREDES | 2 | 29-32 | 2 | 29-33 | 1 | 34-38 | 0.2 | 33-37 | 0.3 | 58-80 |
| LOZANO | 1 | 33-38 | 2 | 29-33 | 2 | 30-33 | 1 | 31-32 | 1 | 34-57 |
| STRAY/UND. ++ | 13 | | 13 | | 12 | | 10 | | 14 | |

SOURCE: SOCIAL WEATHER STATIONS

## Angara, Arroyo, Sotto fighting for last 2 slots

LESS THAN TWO WEEKS BEFORE ELECTION Day, Genuine Opposition candidates and an independent held the top half of the 12 Senate slots at stake, according to a nationwide survey by Social Weather Stations.

Conducted on May 2-4 exclusively for the Philippine Daily Inquirer, the survey indicated that six Senate seats would go to candidates of GO, four to those of Team Unity, and two to independents.

**EXCLUSIVE**

SWS released the results of the survey yesterday, five days before the elections.

Loren Legarda clinched the top spot for the third consecutive time, getting the nod of 59 percent of respondents who said they would "surely vote" in the May 14 elections. (Ninety-two percent of the respondents fell under the "sure voters" category.)

Legarda placed first in all of the four study areas (Metro Manila, the balance of Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao).

In the survey, SWS asked 1,200 registered voters, divided into random samples of 300 each in the four areas, to write their votes on "ballots." The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Legarda was followed by Manuel Villar (46 percent) and Francis Escudero (44 percent). All three belong to the opposition slate.

Independent candidate Francis Pangilinan improved to fourth place (42 percent), up from fifth place in mid-April.

GO candidates Panfilo Lacson (39 percent) and Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III (37 percent) complete the upper half of the winners' list.

Included among the 10 candidates declared "safe" in the winning circle by SWS are TU's Ralph Recto (36 percent), GO's Alan Peter Cayetano (35 percent), and TU's Juan Miguel Zubiri, and independent candidate Gregorio Honasan, who are tied at 33 percent.

This is Zubiri's first time in the Magic 12. In a statement, SWS said that Zubiri's high ranking in Mindanao (second place) and the Visayas (fifth place) offset his poor performance in Metro Manila and the balance of Luzon (15th place).

Competing for the last two seats are three administration candi-

SWS: IT'S 6-4-2/ A8

## Comelec asked to disqualify 12 'gov't' party-lists

By Jerome Aning

THE AKBAYAN PARTY-LIST GROUP yesterday filed disqualification cases against 12 party-list groups, the first batch of what it called dubious or "government front" organizations that the Commission on Elections allowed to participate in this year's polls.

Akbayan formally asked the Comelec to disqualify Akbay Pinoy-OFW National Inc. (APOI), Aksyon Sambayanan (Aksa), Babae Para sa Kaunlaran (Babae Ka), Barangay Association for National Advancement and Transparency (Ba-

COMELEC/ A15

## Iglesia ni Cristo's choice: 6-5-1 for Team Unity

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.,
Kristine L. Alave
and Juliet Labog-Javellana

TEAM UNITY HAS ONE OVER GENUINE Opposition—6-5 with one independent—in the list of senatorial candidates to be endorsed by the Iglesia ni Cristo to its bloc-voting members, according to an INC insider.

According to the highly reliable source, who asked not to be named for lack of authority to divulge the information, the candidates to be endorsed by the highly centralized religious group led by Executive Minister Eraño "Ka Erdie" Manalo are TU's Michael Defensor, Ralph Recto, Vicente Sotto, Juan Miguel Zubiri, Edgardo Angara and Joker Arroyo, and GO's Panfilo Lacson, Loren Legarda, Francis Escudero, Benigno Aquino III and Manuel Villar Jr.

From the independent candidates, the INC picked Francis Pangilinan over Gregorio Honasan, the source said.

Asked to comment, Honasan said: "If it is true that the INC will not support

IGLESIA/ A8

## Soldiers pulled out; protesters driven out

NO TO URBAN MILI ATION
AYAW NAMIN SA MILITAR
METRO MANILA

REM ZAMORA

**SURPRISE TWIST:** Militant groups hold a rally (right) at the Parola Compound in Tondo on Wednesday to demand the pullout of 260 soldiers deployed in 29 barangays in Metro Manila. But residents form a human barricade to keep them out saying the military has kept the peace in their area.

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.
and Allison W. Lopez

IT WAS THE SOLDIERS WHO WERE supposed to pull out. But in a strange turn of events, it was a band of protesters demanding the troops' withdrawal, who ended up being driven out.

Hours after Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. announced his order for troops to withdraw from depressed communities in Metro Manila, angry residents at Parola Compound in Tondo yesterday surrounded a Roman Catholic bishop and about 50 demonstrators calling for the soldiers' withdrawal and screamed at

SOLDIERS/ A9

20 LOAD
Load Na Dito!
ESPERON

**WHAT'S UP HIS SLEEVE?:** AFP Chief of Staff General Esperon shows the human face of the military as he inaugurates a day-care center in Barangay Commonwealth on Wednesday and takes time to mingle with residents.

**EZ2**
16 27

**FOUR DIGIT**
9 3 5 4

Mid-Day **SUERTRES** Evening
3 3 4 | 4 0 2
(All in exact order)

**MEGALOTTO 6/45**
8 21 22 27 40 41
P42,101,629.20

# Second FrontPage

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**WEATHER FORECAST**

FORECAST: Luzon will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms, while Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Metro Manila** | Cloudy with Rains | **Iloilo/Bacolod** | Cloudy with Rains |
| **Baguio** | Cloudy with Rains | **Roxas** | Cloudy with Rains |
| **Tuguegarao** | Cloudy with Rains | **Cebu** | Cloudy with Rains |
| **Laoag** | Cloudy with Rains | **Tacloban** | Cloudy with Rains |
| **Clark Zone** | Cloudy with Rains | **Gen. Santos** | Cloudy with Rains |
| **Tagaytay** | Cloudy with Rains | **Zamboanga** | Cloudy with Rains |
| **Legazpi** | Cloudy with Rains | **Cagayan de Oro** | Cloudy with Rains |
| **Calapan** | Cloudy with Rains | **Davao** | Cloudy with Rains |

COMPILED BY: LAW DE GUZMAN, INQUIRER RESEARCH/05/09/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

# 'Mercury Rising' a hoax – Palace

**By Juliet Labog-Javellana, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Cynthia D. Balana and Michael Lim Ubac**

MALACAÑANG AND TEAM Unity candidates yesterday denied the existence of "Oplan Mercury Rising," saying the alleged plot to rig the election results in favor of three TU senatorial candidates was a "hoax" and a "black propaganda."

"It's just a figment of the imagination of some people," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said in his weekly press briefing, adding that those who made the accusations should present evidence.

"There is no (Oplan Mercury Rising) so why should we be bothered by that? That will not happen because the AFP and the PNP knows that it is wrong so our people should not worry," Ermita said.

Ermita said the Association of Generals and Flag Officers Inc. (Agfo) was not aware of any plot to cheat in next week's elections as exposed by a group of retired military officers belonging to new election watchdog Bantay Boto.

Agfo chair, retired Brig. Gen Jaime Echeverria, said in a statement: "We have not heard of it until it came out in TV news last night and in the Philippine Daily Inquirer today. Agfo is not in a position to answer, much less to confirm, the existence of this alleged oplan."

Echeverria said military or civilian officials should be punished if there was proof that they engaged in election fraud.

Ermita said the statement of the Agfo should have an impact because it includes not only retired but generals and flag officers in active service.

The plot would allegedly ensure that TU candidates Michael Defensor, Jose Miguel Zubiri and Prospero Pichay get the top three slots in four regions and 12 provinces.

But the three TU candidates described the alleged plot as a hackneyed attempt by the opposition to condition the mind of the public of cheating in case Genuine Opposition bets get swamped in the polls.

Pichay dismissed the alleged plan to rig the May 14 elections as "black propaganda."

"If we expect to win by cheating as they claim, why do we have to campaign and suffer all this? We are campaigning because we want clean and honest elections. We want to win the clean way," said Pichay.

Pichay stressed he never cheated during elections and would never engage in it.

Zubiri ridiculed the "Oplan Mercury Rising" as a product of retired generals whose "idle minds have suffered from heatstroke from playing all that golf and started to hallucinate."

On the other hand, Defensor said the intel report was "dumb" and "full of hot air."

Pichay, Zubiri and Defensor were identified as the main beneficiaries of the alleged cheating operations in Ilocos Sur, Pampanga, Camarines Norte, Cebu, Bohol, Leyte, Eastern Samar, Lanao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao and Shariff Kabunsuan that have more than 14 million voters.

But TU spokesperson Ace Durano pointed out that these areas were "really known administration bailiwicks."

"So the only way to counter the strength of the administration in these areas is really to put a cloud of doubt on the integrity of the elections, to question the (poll's) credibility even without evidence," Durano said.

GO bets have dominated pre-election surveys but some TU bets have been biggest movers in the latest polls.

# Embattled Naga mayor gets Cory's support

**By Dona Z. Pazzibugan**

FORMER PRESIDENT CORAZON Aquino led political personalities and civil society group leaders in a show of force yesterday for embattled reelectionist Naga City Mayor Jesse Robredo who faces a disqualification case before the Commission on Elections.

A number of prominent personalities, including four former Cabinet officials of President-Macapagal Arroyo, turned up at the manifesto-signing in Makati City, calling on the Comelec to reverse a ruling by one of its divisions that stripped Robredo of his post for allegedly not being a Filipino citizen.

Robredo, a Ramon Magsaysay awardee, said he would have given up his fight against his political enemies were it not for the overwhelming show of support.

"I know Jesse to be one of the best mayors this country has ever had. You have really impressed me. I wish there will come a time all mayors will be like you," Aquino said.

Aquino likened the harassment against Robredo to that experienced by anti-Marcos dissidents, including her husband the late senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., during martial law.

"We need to make a stand and speak up. During martial law, only a few were not cowed by the dictator and made their sentiments known)," said Aquino.

Among those who showed up were former Arroyo Cabinet officials Florencio "Butch" Abad, Corazon "Dinky" Soliman, Teresita "Ging" Deles, who resigned and called for Ms Arroyo's resignation in July 2005, and Elisea Gozon.

Stalwarts of the Liberal Party, where Robredo belongs to, also showed up led by LP president Sen. Franklin Drilon, Sen. Manuel "Mar" Roxas II, Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III.

Robredo, who is running against administration candidate Jojo Villafuerte, a nephew of Rep. Luis Villafuerte., said he and his supporters were humbled by the show of support.

# *GO vows to counter election cheating plot*

**By Norman Bordadora**

THE GENUINE OPPOSITION YESTERDAY said that its extensive network of poll watchers would counter cheating in Monday's elections, including "Oplan Mercury Rising,"—an alleged plot to ensure that three Team Unity candidates would bag the top three slots in four regions and in 12 provinces.

Lawyer Adel Tamano, GO spokesperson, said the opposition would have poll watchers in 95 percent of the over 1,600 cities and municipalities nationwide despite having local candidates in just a little more than half of them.

"We take the report (on Oplan Mercury Rising) seriously. In fact, I was in Lanao del Sur just a few days back and I received information that there will be violence in the area to force the counting to be transferred to Camp Keithley," Tamano said.

"These reports of electoral fraud all complement each other and somehow they verify that there will be cheating," he added.

Tamano said GO has taken into account "Oplan Mercury Rising" in planning its vote protection strategies in the coming weeks.

## Red-herring

"(But) we're not focusing on the areas identified in Oplan Mercury Rising because it might be a red-herring. We have enough poll watchers to cover 95 percent of the cities and municipalities nationwide," Tamano said.

The plot, bared by poll watchdog group Bantay Boto, will supposedly be implemented in Ilocos Sur, the Visayas and in Mindanao. The group is composed of retired generals, officers and enlisted personnel.

It will allegedly involve top election officers and aims to make administration candidates Michael Defensor, Prospero Pichay and Jose Miguel Zubiri the top candidates in the pinpointed provinces and regions which have more than 14 million registered voters.

Defensor and Pichay have yet to make it to the top 12 among senatorial candidates in all surveys conducted by the Social Weather Stations and Pulse Asia, Inc. Zubiri broke into the winning circle only recently.

Tamano said GO is calling on the regional and provincial election officers and on members of the military to refrain from engaging in partisan activities in the coming elections to ensure its integrity.

## Mistakes of '04

"We've learned from the mistakes of 2004. We would have poll watchers in precincts in 95 percent of the cities and municipalities," Tamano said.

Tamano was referring to the experience of the opposition in the 2004 presidential and senatorial elections when it failed to field poll watchers in many precincts and local canvassing centers.

"This time, we're ready for them. We're asking them to no longer engage in cheating so there would be orderly elections," he added.

Having the Liberal Party as a coalition partner appears to be a key in GO's vote protection strategy. The LP under the leadership of Sen. Franklin Drilon was declared by the Commission on Elections as the dominant minority party.

"The LP's copy of the election return would be vital. It will be the basis of our poll watchers to question figures during the canvassing in the city and municipal levels if there are discrepancies," Tamano said.

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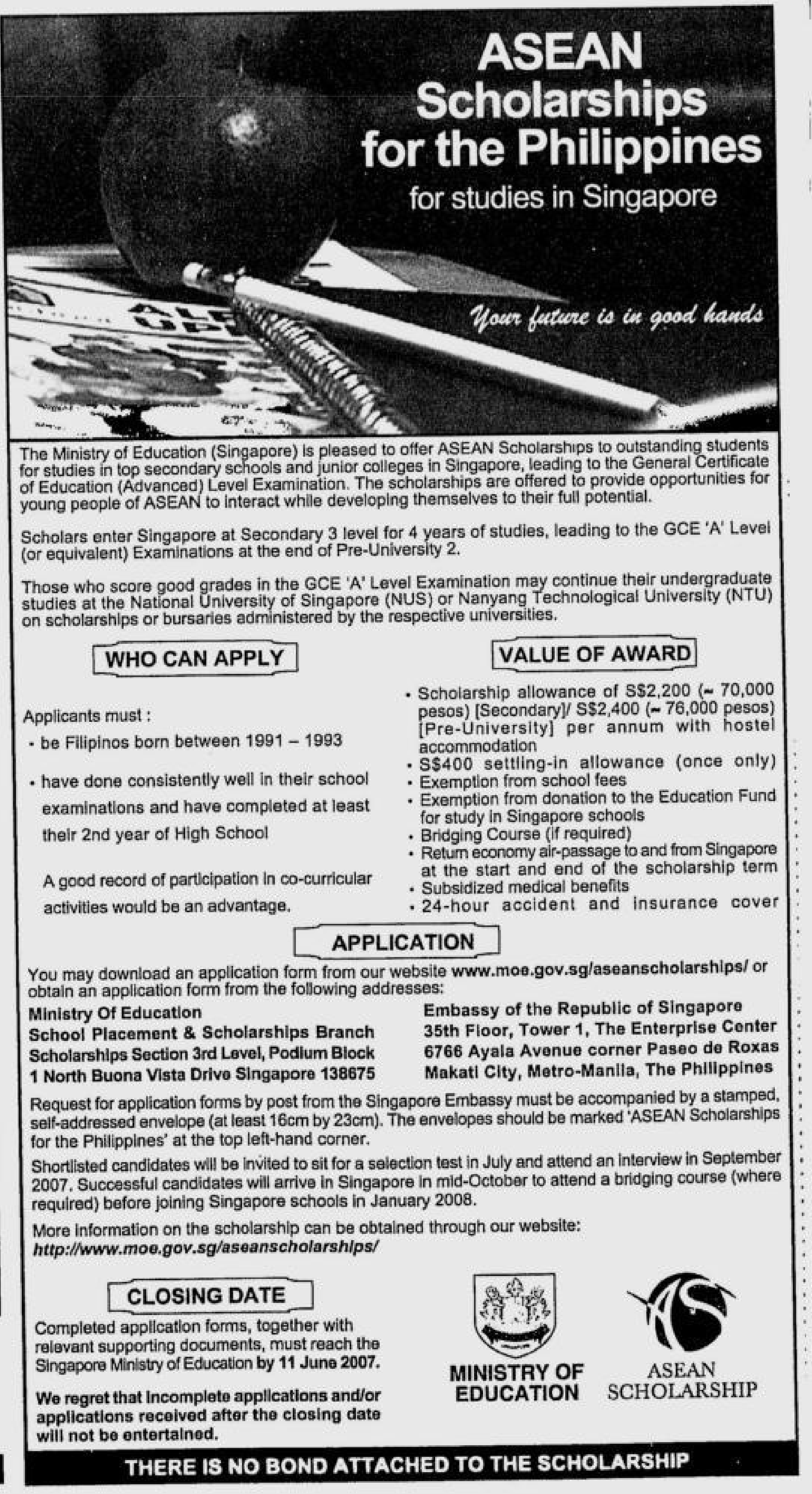
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# Blast triggers heightened alert

THE GOVERNMENT TIGHTened security and suspended all leave for soldiers yesterday after eight people were killed in a bombing blamed on local terrorists working for the Jemaah Islamiyah regional terror group.

A homemade bomb ripped through a billiards hall Tuesday in Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat, in central Mindanao, killing three on the spot and five more overnight in an attack officials said bore the hallmarks of al-Qaida linked terrorists from the Jemaah Islamiyah.

Twenty-seven people were being treated for injuries after the attack which came a week before mid-term elections, with security forces already stretched thin to cope with a rash of violence in the run-up to the May 14 vote.

"We see the signature of the JI in this attack," Supt. Teng Tocao, Sultan Kudarat police director, told local radio.

Military ordnance experts said the explosive device may have been fashioned from a live rocket-propelled grenade shell attached to a battery and set off by a mechanical clock and blasting cap.

## Extra police

Extra police were deployed to patrol the streets of Tacurong while military checkpoints were set up around the city.

Regional military chief Maj. Gen. Reymundo Ferrer also pointed a finger at the JI, saying he believed the attack was designed to ease pressure on militants holed up on nearby Jolo island.

Several JI militants led by wanted Indonesian fugitives Umar Patek and Dulmatin are holed up with the Abu Sayyaf extremist group on Jolo island.

"The situation is slowly normalizing but we have continued to beef up security. At the same time intelligence units have intensified their operations," he said.

Armed Forces Chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon said all leave for officers and their men would be suspended as they go on heightened alert around the country.

He said the alert would remain in force until after the elections.

"We can make that assumption that some groups would want to carry out actions during the elections when security forces would be stretched," Esperon told reporters.

More checkpoints were to be set up on Mindanao highways, and troops provided extra security at sensitive government installations, officials said.

Regional Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Julieto Ando suggested the group may have set up local cells that could be activated through coded mobile phone calls to carry out attacks.

Ando said that prior to Tuesday's blast, intelligence reports had indicated an imminent attack by the JI or the Abu Sayyaf.

The same market in Tacurong was bombed in October 2006, wounding four people, and late last month police foiled another bomb attack when they discovered and safely detonated a homemade bomb at a nearby mall.

## October blast

Also in October last year, a bomb exploded near the municipal hall of Makilala in the adjacent province of North Cotabato, killing six.

All the attacks were blamed either on the JI or the Abu Sayyaf, but no one was arrested.

Tacurong Mayor Lino Montilla said that local terrorists working for the Jemaah Islamiyah were targeting the city days before Tuesday's explosion.

The site of the explosion was just across a restaurant where election officials, candidates and military officers, were meeting ahead of May 14 balloting.

Three of the eight fatalities were identified as Basilisa Landig, Ronald Reyes and Kadsa Langalen. The three were killed on the spot, said Tocao.

"The billiard hall was full of bystanders and pool viewers since it was raining at the time," he said.

Montilla said that from a police intelligence report given to local government officials, the attack was to be carried out by a group headed by Edris Sabal and Abdul Sabidi.

"The police have linked them to the Jemaah Islamiyah," he said.

Supt. Joel Limson, the Tacurong police chief, said the police have already produced an artist's sketch of the suspect who, witnesses said, had left a bag inside the billiard hall. *Jeffrey Maitem, Aquiles Zonio and Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao, with AFP*

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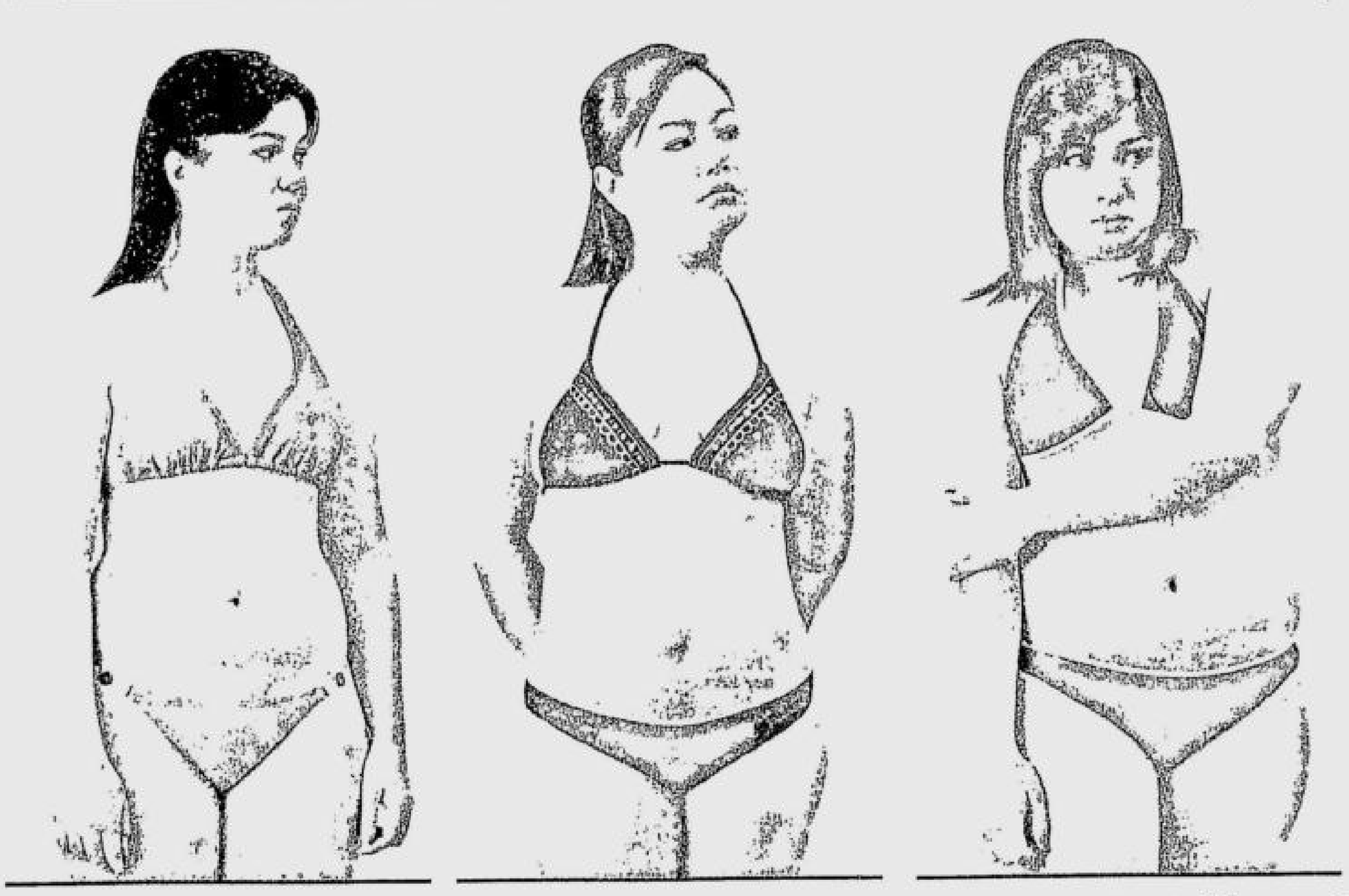

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# Nigerian kidnappers release 8 RP workers

By Cynthia D. Balana

NIGERIAN KIDNAPPERS HAVE released the eight Filipinos and three South Koreans they kidnapped from a Daewoo construction site in the country's oil-rich south last week, the foreign affairs department said yesterday.

The Filipino workers are now in the custody of Nigerian authorities and will be returning home tomorrow, according to Esteban Conejos, the undersecretary for migrant affairs.

The hostages—including the visiting Daewoo engineering and construction managing director, two Nigeria-based Daewoo executives and eight Filipino workers from the same company who were kidnapped last Thursday after a gunfight at their power plant construction site in the southern Rivers state—were released at around 12 midnight on Wednesday.

After the formalities at Government House in the Port Harcourt state capital, the Filipinos underwent a medical examination at the Security Services Hospital and were found to be in good condition, according to a report from Vice Consul Randy Aquiza, who headed the consular team sent to Rivers state.

Dauday Tago, charges d'affaires of the Philippine embassy in Abuja, said the freed workers were scheduled to leave Lagos today and would be arriving in Manila tomorrow.

## No ransom policy

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo thanked the governments of Nigeria, Korea and Daewoo officials for their help and cooperation in securing the release of the hostages.

It was not yet clear whether any ransom had been paid, South Korean envoy to Nigeria, Lee Kie-dong, said in a Yonhap news agency report. Lee said an agreement was struck after Rivers state officials weighed demands made by the kidnappers on Tuesday.

Conejos said he did not know if any ransom money was paid, adding that it was against the government's policy to pay ransom.

And if ransom was paid by the other parties, it was immaterial to talk about it as the hostages had been freed.

"It is a problem between Nigeria and these people [the kidnappers] because these are its citizens. Therefore, they should resolve this among themselves. Let's not get involved," he said.

Conejos said the militants were kidnapping foreigners to dramatize their grievances against the government. He said there were many such groups in Nigeria but until now the Nigerian government has not been able establish the identity of the kidnappers in the latest incident.

Conejos said the abduction was the seventh involving Filipinos in Nigeria, and the third this year. He said there were no Filipino workers in Port Harcourt anymore. There are Filipino workers in other parts of Nigeria but they are relatively safe, he said.

## Ban remains

Labor Secretary Arturo Brion welcomed the release of the Filipino workers but said the selective deployment ban would remain for Nigeria, pending a thorough assessment on the general situation in the West African country by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

A ban on the deployment of workers to Nigeria was imposed last year after several Filipinos were taken hostage. It was partially lifted last March, allowing the processing and deployment of returning OFWs who are on vacation and are going to work with the same employer and work site in Nigeria.

Brion was supposed to sign an order allowing full deployment, to benefit OFWs with new contracts, when the latest kidnapping occurred.

The Philippine government on Monday had rejected appeals to directly negotiate with the gunmen. Conejos said the Philippines would rely on the Nigerian government to bring an end to the crisis.

A day earlier, one of the Filipino hostages appealed for help in a recorded radio message, saying they were being beaten and starved by their captors in a Nigerian jungle.

But in the same recording, a heavily accented voice could be heard in the background telling the hostage what to say.

The release came as the most high-profile armed group, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), sabotaged three pipelines and vowed to keep up its attacks on oil targets last Tuesday.

The oil-rich Niger Delta area has been the center of a long confrontation between the government, militants who claim to be fighting for a larger share of the country's oil resources for local people, and a plethora of armed gangs out to make ransom money.

More than 150 foreign workers have been kidnapped since the start of 2006, most, but not all of them connected to the oil industry. *With AFP and Jerome Aning*

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*SILA AY TUNAY NA MGA BAYANI.*
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# Doomed Pinay back home still in one piece

By Tarra Quismundo
and Jerome Aning

SARAH DEMATERA (right) returns to the embrace of her sister.
JESS YUSON

SARAH DEMATERA, THE MIGRANT worker spared from execution and freed after 15 long years in a Saudi prison, came home to an emotional reunion with her family.

Upon emerging from the plane, Dematera poured 15 years of missed hugs and kisses on her mother Josie and sisters Ivylyn and Jonalyn.

"I thank President Macapagal-Arroyo, all the Filipinos who helped me ... I am very happy. I thank Ms Arroyo that she helped me get out of jail. I wish we could help other Filipinos in jail there," said Dematera as she walked through a throng of journalists at the airport terminal.

In a statement, Dematera said in Filipino: "The Saudi government took care of my case, and they treated me properly. From what I experienced, the law is fair in Saudi."

"I want to forget the past. Right now, the future is more important for me and what I can do for my family, for my fellowmen, for myself," she said.

"I thank all OFWs who helped me. This answered all my prayers and that of others who prayed for me," she said.

Dematera was the first passenger to deplane from the Saudia Airlines flight that took her home from the Middle East. She was accompanied on the flight by the country's ambassador to Riyadh, Antonio Villamor.

"I am happy for the family. I was there only at the end game. There were so many people involved," said Villamor.

For the family, Dematera's return ended 15 years of tears, prayers and struggle to free her.

"Every time there was a new (Foreign Affairs) Secretary, OWWA administrator or President, we started back to zero. This time, we turned to the right person," said Ivylyn Dematera, referring to Ms Arroyo.

Sarah Dematera was 19 years old when she arrived in Saudi Arabia in November 1992 to work as a domestic helper. Only four days later, she was arrested, accused of murdering her female employer, Loloa Saleh Al-Humaidi.

She was meted the death penalty and served 15 years in prison before being freed last May 1.

Her sentence was reduced following appeals by the Philippine government and after the President personally asked for her release during a state visit to Saudi Arabia last year.

It was Prince Muhammad Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, governor of the KSA Eastern Province, who interceded for Dematera's release.

The victim's spouse, Khaled Al-Ghanam, agreed to issue *thanazul* (forgiveness) in exchange for *diyah* (blood money) that was raised from the generous contributions of people who became interested in her case.

Labor Secretary Arturo Brion, who joined other government officials in welcoming Dematera at the Manila international airport, said Dematera would be provided with appropriate assistance under the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration's Reintegration Program. *With Paolo Montecillo*

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# Rebel priest says bets paid millions to NPA

By Vicente S. Labro
*Inquirer Visayas*

TACLOBAN CITY—REBEL PRIEST SANTIAGO Salas, a spokesperson for the communist-led National Democratic Front (NDF) in Eastern Visayas claimed in a radio interview yesterday that candidates gave them "thousands or millions" of pesos to be able to campaign in rebel-controlled areas.

Speaking over the radio station dyDW here, Salas said candidates who sought "permission to campaign" from the communist New People's Army (NPA) gave them cash and firearms, among others.

Salas, however, did not give out the names, specific amounts or areas where permit-to-campaign (PTC) fees were given.

There was no fix amount for the PTC. This would depend on negotiations between the NPA field commander and the candidate, he said.

He also said that those who gave PTC "donations" were not given any assurance that they would win in those areas.

These are donations given by politicians because they want to befriend the NPA, and "especially because they want to get the sympathy of the revolutionary government for their candidacies," Salas added.

There was no way to independently confirm what the rebel priest said, but military officials in the area say their own intelligence reports indicate that some politicians and businessmen have given money to the rebels. Also, that the rebels do control certain areas.

Interviewed over the same station, Capt. Mario Chico, spokesperson of the Army's 8th Infantry Division, said Salas was just "dreaming" when he said the politicians are paying the PTC to befriend and support the communist movement.

"We all know that the politicians pay the PTC out of fear," Chico said.

"What do the NPA guerrillas do when the politicians do not pay them PTC? Of course, they can not enter their area and if they do, something bad will happen to them," he said.

Chico cited the reported abduction in the 2004 elections in Jiabong town in Samar province of a mayoralty candidate and her party mates.

He also warned that the paying of the PTC would lead to corruption in government because politicians would only try to recoup their expenses once they get elected.

"The NPA is teaching our politicians to be corrupt," Chico said.

# More Europe aid to RP seen

NOW AND IN THE FUTURE, THE PHILIPPINES can expect assistance from the European Commission concerning major issues such as climate change as well as values including respect for human rights.

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, EC commissioner for external relations and neighborhood policy, made this assurance in a statement issued yesterday by the EC delegation to the Philippines to mark "Europe Day" and the anniversary of what has come to be known as the Schuman Declaration.

Speaking in Paris on May 9, 1950, Robert Schuman, then foreign minister of France, proposed a new form of political arrangement aimed at making war unthinkable between European nations. As a result, the European Community was created on March 25, 1957.

With 27 member-states and a population of 488 million, the European Union now serves to protect and promote prosperity, solidarity and security across Europe, Waldner said.

It has "undoubtedly been a tremendous success, with 50 years of unprecedented peace and prosperity in Europe," she said.

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# *CBCP head steps into watchdogs' row*

**By Nikko Dizon and Cathy C. Yamsuan**

ARCHBISHOP ANGEL LAGdameo, head of the powerful Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), stepped in yesterday to stop a brewing conflict among non-government electoral watchdogs—the Parish Pastoral Council of the Philippines (PPCRV), and the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) and the National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice, and Peace (Nassa).

With only five days to go before election day, Lagdameo rebuked the PPCRV, the Church's civic arm, for planning to set up an unofficial quick count separate from that of Namfrel and Nassa at the La Salle Greenhills auditorium.

In a May 2 letter obtained by the INQUIRER, Lagdameo warned that the conflict was creating a "threatening storm" that could lay to waste all their preparations to counter electoral fraud on May 14.

The Namfrel-Nassa coalition is accredited by the Commission on Elections as its citizens' arm to conduct a parallel quick count. The Namfrel-Nassa will be supplied an official copy of the election returns.

The PPCRV, on the other hand, is the accredited citizen's arm for poll watching. It said it would field more than one million volunteers as poll watchers, and will receive the COV (Canvass of Votes) from the precincts.

Sought for comment, PPCRV chair Henrietta de Villa told the INQUIRER that they are "not going to make a parallel count, contrary to the reports."

At least not in the national level. De Villa admitted that "some dioceses" want to tabulate the votes of their local candidates directly using the COVs gathered by their poll watchers.

She said the PPCRV board would meet again to clarify this matter.

The controversy came out in the open when PPCRV board member Dr. Ricardo Ledesma revealed the planned parallel count during the Kapihan ng Bayan forum at the Sulo Hotel on Monday.

Ledesma said their poll watchers would report the raw precinct scores directly to the PPCRV headquarters at Pope Pius Center, Manila, without waiting for the official ER.

In a phone interview after the forum, Ledesma told the INQUIRER that this way there would be less chances that figures will be doctored.

Unlike Namfrel, PPCRV's tally will not have to wait for Comelec ERs before reporting any figure.

"Manipulation happens during the canvassing. This is the stage when *dagdag-bawas* (vote shaving) happens. The PPCRV count will definitely be more reliable because there is less manipulation," he explained.

Ledesma insisted that PPCRV's activities are not in conflict nor parallel to Namfrel's quick count.

But Namfrel and CBCP do not agree. They feel such a count will only create confusion.

*With Kristine L. Alave*

# Death toll in poll violence hits 100

CABANATUAN CITY—THE COUNTRY's election death toll closed in on 100 as gunmen killed a barangay official and another man allied with a political candidate in separate attacks in Nueva Ecija province on Tuesday night.

Motorcycle-riding gunmen fatally shot Alex Mempin, 45, a barangay council member of San Isidro Malapit in San Isidro town, while he was riding on a motorcycle at about 7 p.m. on Tuesday, said Senior Supt. Alfredo Caballes, Task Force Nueva Ecija commander.

Mempin was said to be a political coordinator of reelectionist Nueva Ecija Rep. Rodolfo Antonino.

About an hour later, a man shot Nestor Macabio, the driver of mayoral candidate Dennis Alejandro, in a poultry farm in Barangay Dulong Bayan in Quezon town.

Macabio, who was shot in both legs, crawled out and hid in a rice field but died from loss of blood as people in the farm could not go out to help him for fear of being shot shot too.

Reports said Alejandro was attending a meeting nearby when his driver was attacked.

Caballes said the incidents could be considered election-related because the victims were associated with politicians running for office on May 14.

However, he said the police were looking at other possible motives in the attacks.

The murder of Mempin and Macabio occurred on the same day that police and Commission on Elections officials announced new measures to prevent the escalation of violence in Nueva Ecija.

Police say 99 people have been killed and 102 others wounded in 139 incidents linked to frenzied campaigning ahead of the elections.

Nueva Ecija is one of several provinces regarded as security hotspots ahead of the elections because of the presence of armed groups maintained by political warlords and a surfeit of unlicensed guns.

On April 26, security forces of Antonino and Jaen mayoral candidate Antonio Esquivel engaged in a firefight in Jaen town. Two men were killed while 12 others, including Esquivel's two sons, were wounded.

In La Union, a councilor in Naguilian town and two of his supporters were wounded when a group of armed men fired at their vehicle while they were campaigning in Barangay Guiseng Norte at about 5 p.m. on Tuesday.

Police said Councilor Isagani Rimando, a son of former Mayor Franco Rimando, was shot in the right thigh while his companions, Val Garcia and Randy Dumo, were hit in the right eye and left foot, respectively.

Police said Rimando's group was driving in a Kia Besta van when the suspects on board a Mitsubishi Pajero fired at their vehicle.

Citing accounts of survivors and witnesses, police said one of the suspects, Casper Nocasa, was a driver and bodyguard of a local politician.

The elder Rimando, who is running for mayor, has asked police and election officials to recommend that Naguilian be placed under Comelec protection.

In Davao City, the Suara Bangsamoro party-list group said the fatal shooting last Sunday of Usman Ali,one of its members in Pikit, North Cotabato, was apparently politically motivated. *Anselmo Roque Central Luzon Inquirer and Hanna Lacsamana Inquirer Northern Luzon with Jeffrey M. Tupas and Chris V. Panganiban, Inquirer Mindanao with AP*

# Masbate placed under Comelec control

**By Nikko Dizon**

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (Comelec) yesterday placed the province of Masbate under its control following violent incidents over the weekend that left two people dead.

Election commissioner Rene Sarmiento told reporters that the rising death toll was already a "cause for concern."

Sarmiento's fellow commissioner, Florentino Tuason Jr., will be the commissioner-in-charge of Masbate.

At present, there are now six areas under the Comelec's control due to election-related violence.

Aside from Masbate, the other provinces under Comelec control are Abra, Kalinga Apayao, Nueva Ecija, Valencia town in Bukidnon, and San Carlos City in Pangasinan.

The Comelec has imposed a total gun ban in all these areas, which means all gun exemption permits issued by the poll body to civilians are automatically revoked.

Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said that Tuesday's bombing in Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat that left eight people dead and 35 wounded was most likely an attack carried out by secessionist groups.

"I don't know whether it is politically-motivated. (But it seems) it has nothing to do with politics," Abalos said.

Meanwhile, Abalos lauded the Armed Forces of the Philippines for pulling out soldiers from Metro Manila's urban poor communities, saying it showed the military's intentions to remain non-partisan in next week's elections.

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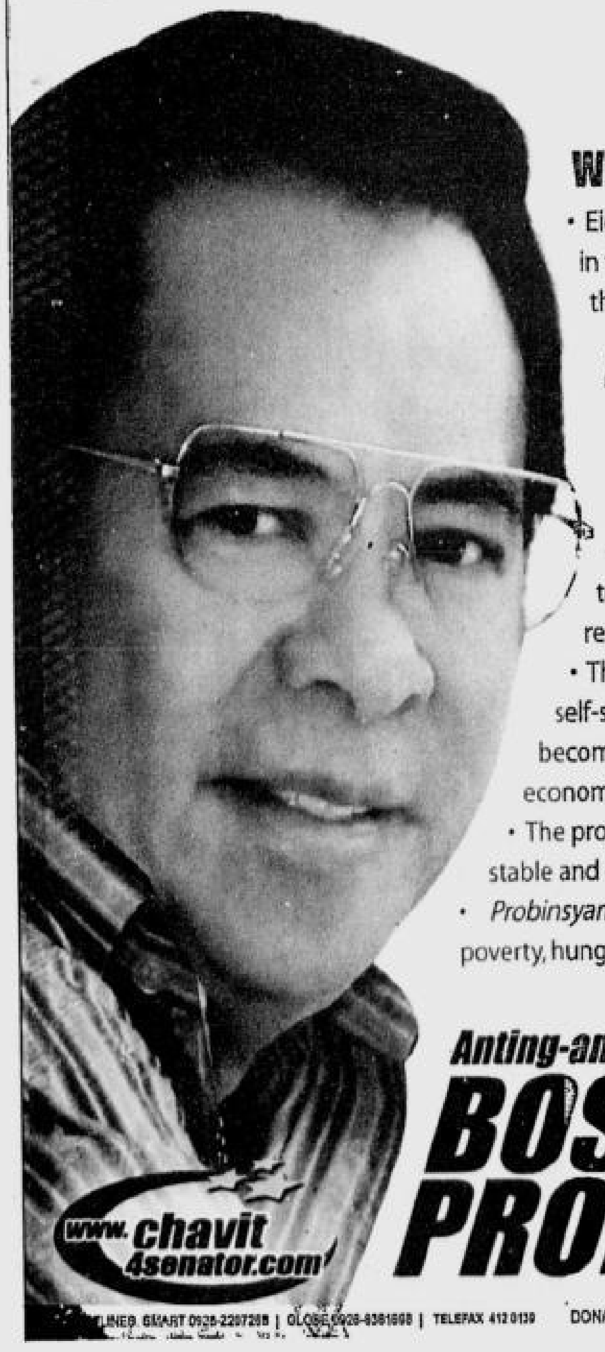

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# Pols 'PIG-ging' out in North for 'baboy diplomacy'

From page A1

Not any more. The pride of Sta. Maria has disappeared, a casualty of the campaign for the May 14 elections.

Not only has bagnet become scarce, its price has gone up, up and away to a high of P300 a kilo.

*"Naibus ti baboy. Inibus ti pulitiko* (The pigs have disappeared. The politicians have bought them all)," said Wendy Serdenia, a local meat vendor.

Serdenia said few pigs had been found since last December when politicians went to the hustings.

Actually, the situation isn't so bad. Many incumbent officials in Ilocos Sur are running unopposed. And so, the demand for pig was not as great as it was three years ago, local vendors said.

Still, politicians have to feed people during caucuses.

Pigs aren't only to be eaten. It could also mean a campaign strategy.

The "PIG" tactic could mean victory in the polls: Persuade (convincing people to vote for them), Identify (know your constituents through market segmentation) and Go out and vote (bring them to the precincts).

In this Year of the Fire Boar, pigs have become the sacrificial animal.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in Benguet where "baboy diplomacy" has become the norm.

Traditionally, before the start of the election season, a pig is slaughtered to see if the potential candidate who paid for it has a chance. The liver is examined by the *mambunong* (native priest) to look for a good omen.

After that, a politician is expected to pay for a pig during the campaign sortie in the villages.

"It's cheaper to buy a pig. Dogs are expensive," said Ronald Cosalan, who is running in the lone congressional district race in Benguet against incumbent Rep. Samuel Dangwa.

"In a small group, chicken is more practical. But in caucuses, you have to get a pig. A dog is much more expensive," he said.

A live pig costs at least P5,000 here.

Journalist Baboo Mondoñedo, who recently went on a campaign trail in Benguet, said in some towns, opposing candidates campaign together to save on "pig fines."

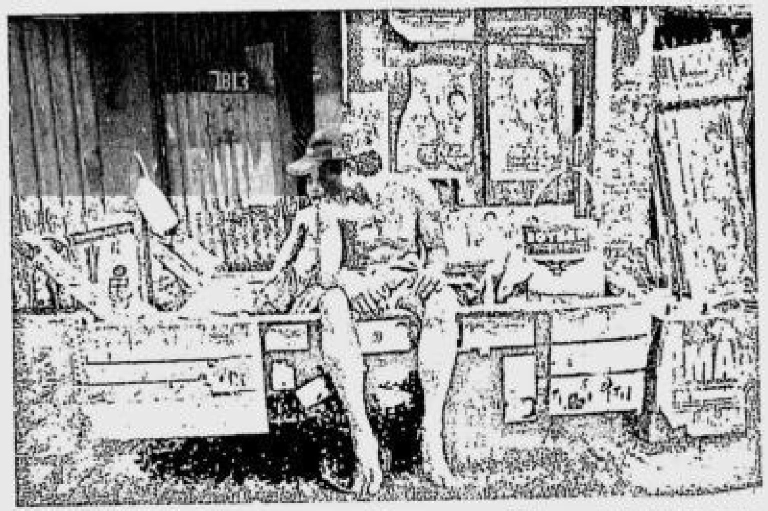
"In places like Buguias, the opposing candidates deliver their platforms together and then they contribute to buy a pig. The councilors pay less than the mayors," she said.

But eating pork every caucus can be bad for one's health.

"The *tapuy* (rice wine) I enjoyed, but please no more boiled pork," said Anna Angara, who went to the Cordillera to campaign for her father, reelectionist Sen. Edgardo Angara.

# Economy forgotten in campaign

From page A1



PROMISES, PROMISES: Roberto Magyoyo and his son sit in their cart that also serves as their home surrounded by election campaign posters and the promises for a better life of politicians in Manila. AP

"The opposition sees the issue of legitimacy [of President Macapagal-Arroyo] as the biggest weakness of the administration. It can see that her acceptability [in surveys] is low, so it is concentrating on that," he said.

Meanwhile, administration candidates, especially at the national level, are busy defending themselves and their party from attacks against the President, Policarpio said, adding:

"Because of this, economic issues have been sidelined."

But if the important economic debate is occurring largely in the background, if at all, it is mainly because the Arroyo administration holds bragging rights on good statistics, despite the contrary perception of the lower strata of society.

"This line of attack was dictated by the opposition groups. But the administration [party] swallowed it hook, line and sinker," he said.

## Long wish list

Nevertheless, the business community has a long wish list of economic priorities.

The list is skewed in favor of financial reforms, which are invariable technical issues and difficult to "sell" to legislators.

But the business community is equally concerned about the conduct of the coming political exercise. It is to come up with a full-page advertisement late this week calling on political parties and candidates, the military, the Commission on Elections, and the people to protect the integrity of the polls.

"There are many pieces of legislation that need to be addressed," said Bankers Association of the Philippines executive director Leonilo G. Coronel.

"They are important for the economy to continue growing, but we have trouble tickling the imagination of senators and congressmen."

Coronel said a number of business organizations had been meeting periodically to hammer out a common economic agenda, particularly the issue of developing capital markets, for presentation to Congress.

At the top of the business community's wish list is a law that would update the Philippines' antiquated Bankruptcy Code with a proposed Corporate Recovery Act.

The proposed measure, which is expected to make it easier for regulators to impose rehabilitation plans on moribund companies, have been endorsed by various business groups since 2000.

But they have met with little success mainly because legislators did not find the issue "sexy," Coronel said.

## Propublic

Business organizations like the influential Makati Business Club (MBC) plan to ask Congress to pass the proposed Land Administration Reform Act, which would streamline land titling services and eliminate land titling scams.

The business sector also wants Congress to act on the dormant Revised Investment Company Act, revise the charter of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, and enact a law that would require all financial institutions to pool their databases of borrowers into a single credit information bureau.

The expected result is lower borrowing costs for companies and individuals.

"From experience, it was easy to label these measures as prorich, when in fact they protect the interests of the general public as well," Coronel said.

"It was also difficult to convince lawmakers to sponsor them because the issues, while very important, would not give them much media mileage," he said.

## Political reform, too

For the MBC, however, the overarching concern goes beyond economic legislation or policies.

"We have a legislative agenda in mind, but we also need political reform," said MBC executive director Alberto Lim.

According to Lim, well-crafted legislation and policies of the executive branch have their limits, especially if the people are generally skeptical of their political leaders.

This skepticism will hold true if the Monday elections will again be marked by allegations of massive cheating, as in the case of the 2004 presidential election, he said.

Lim said credible elections were critical for the country to move forward and unite behind the President, unlike the previous polls which gave the administration little choice but to operate on "survival mode" by cutting deals with interest groups at the expense of good policies.

The planned advertisement—to be put out by the MBC, Management Association of the Philippines, Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, among others—will underscore this point.

"In the end, we really need political reforms if we want the economy to continue to grow," Lim said.

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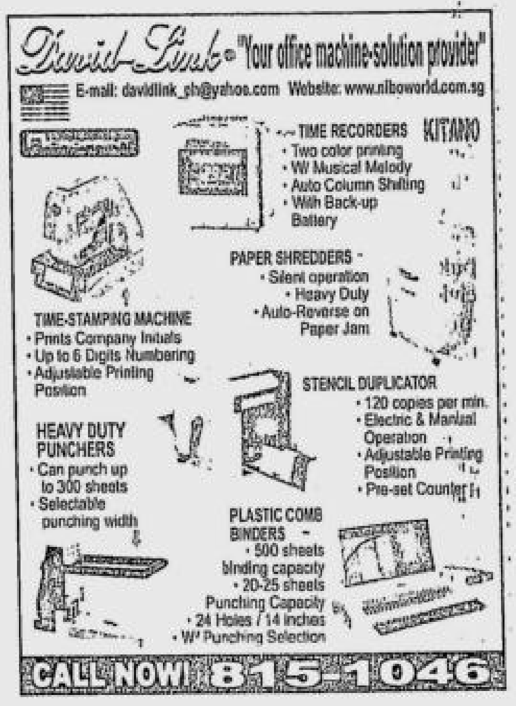

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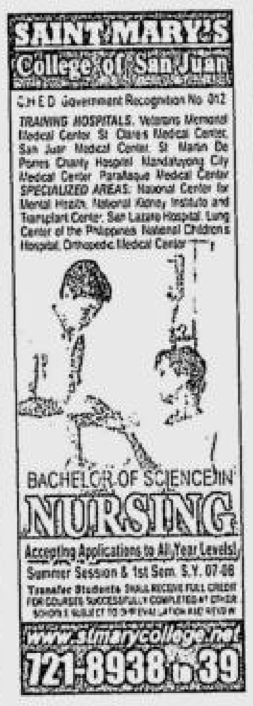

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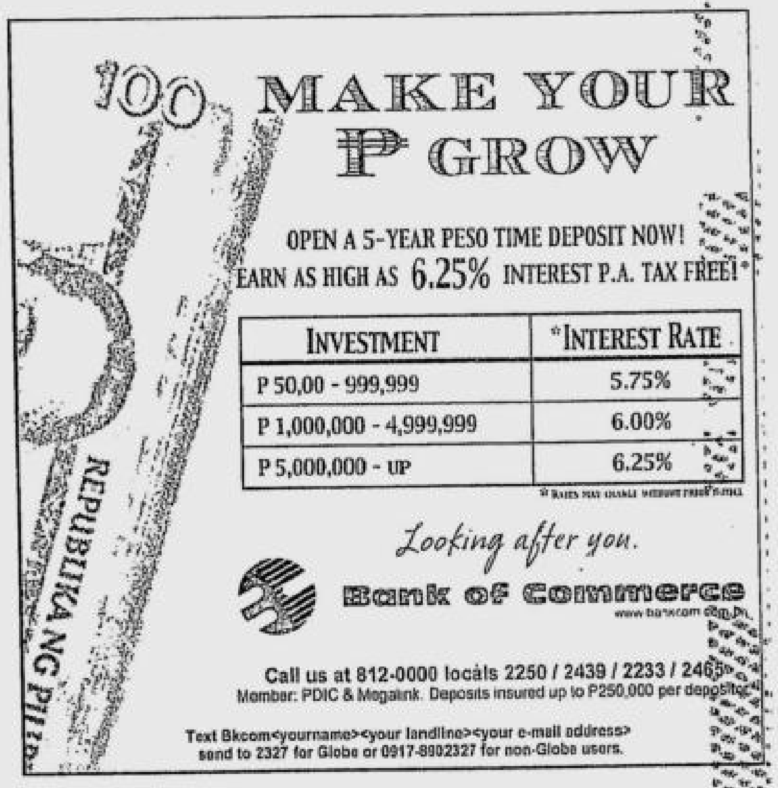

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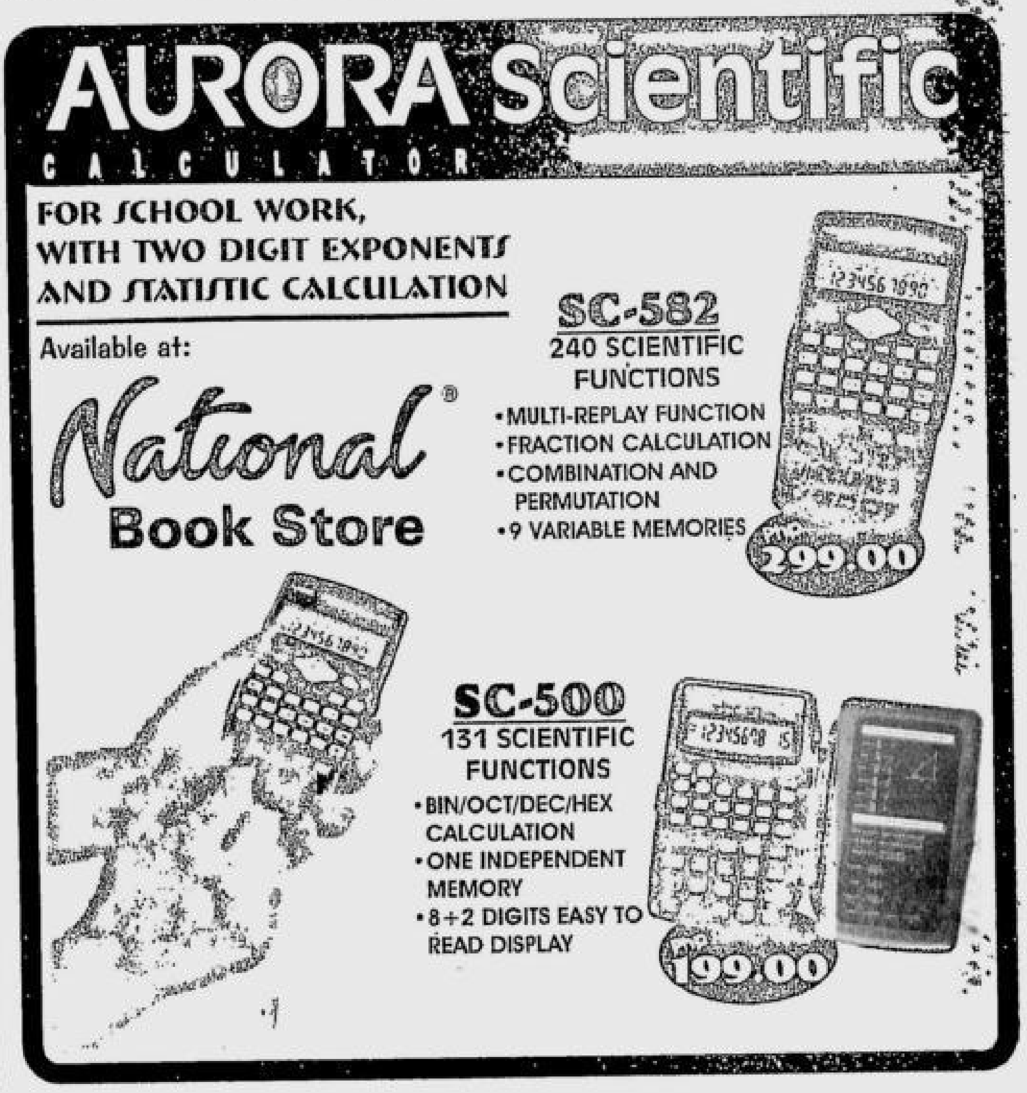

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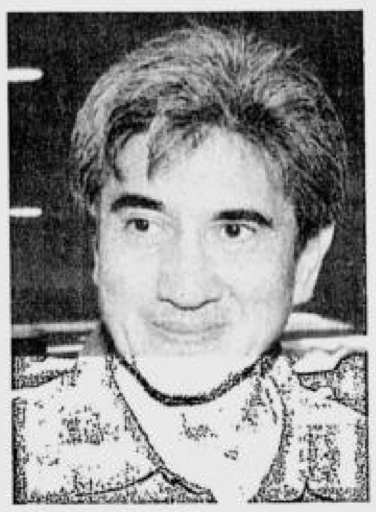
⑨ ZUBIRI


⑩ HONASAN

⑪ ANGARA

⑫ ARROYO

# SWS: It's 6-4-2 for Genuine Opposition

From page A1

dates—Edgardo Angara (32 percent), Joker Arroyo (31 percent) and Vicente Sotto III (28 percent).

The survey included Joselito Cayetano of Kilusang Bagong Lipunan, a clerk in a stevedoring firm in Davao City, who has a pending disqualification case with the Commission on Elections. SWS assigned "Cayetano" votes (7 percent) to Alan Peter Cayetano.

"If Joselito is declared qualified, the loss of the 'Cayetano-unspecified' votes would drop Alan Cayetano to a tie with Sotto for 12th place, and make possible a new scenario of 5 GOs, 2 independents, and 5 TUs as winners," SWS said.

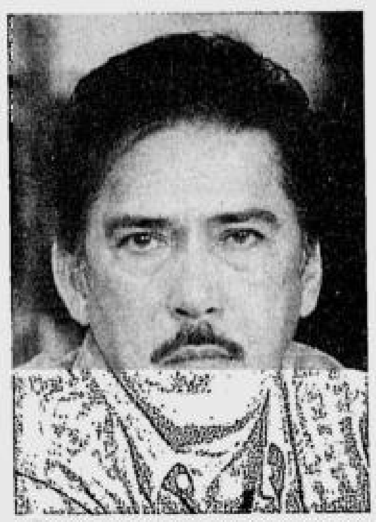
The survey outcome was a result of what SWS called "ticket mixing." Only 13 percent of the registered voters polled (including those who were unsure if they would vote on May 14) went "purely" for GO, while 7.6 percent voted purely for TU.

"Even among partisans who went 'purely' for either GO or TU, in most cases the ballots were for 4-0 at most; instances of 12-0 were very rare," SWS says.

Almost 10 percent of respondents either did not vote for any GO or TU candidate, or did not vote at all.

### Aquino, Honasan big gainers

Aside from Zubiri, who rose five ranks since mid-April to get the ninth-tenth slot (based on the votes of all registered voters, including those who are not "sure voters"), the big gainers are Aquino (rose five ranks, from 11th-13th to sixth-seventh) and Honasan (rose two ranks, from 11th-13th to ninth-tenth).


⑬ SOTTO

OSMEÑA from No. 9 to 21

Antonio Trillanes IV, who gained 10 percentage points (from 14 percent to 24 percent), moved from 21st place to 15th-16th.

Trillanes' case shows that "it is not impossible to make up a large deficit within a short period of time," SWS said.

### Angara, Arroyo, Sotto slip

Angara fell four ranks, while Arroyo and Sotto fell three ranks (based on the votes of registered voters).

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay, the top campaign spender, according to the group Pera't Pulitika, ranked 17th in this month's survey, with only 24 percent of "sure voters" saying they would vote for him.

SWS says this translates to a 7-percent deficit behind the final winning slot (Arroyo's 31 percent).

The polling firm said: "No senatorial candidate in the last three elections was able to overcome a survey deficit that was still statistically significant at the beginning of May."

The last three SWS "homestretch surveys" on senatorial elections, or surveys conducted in the beginning of May during election years, predicted accurately the winning senatorial slate.

All the top 12 candidates in the 1998 and 2004 homestretch surveys won, while 10 of the top 12 in the 2001 SWS survey were elected to the Senate. That year, SWS declared only nine of the candidates statistically safe. *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

**SENATORIAL PREFERENCES by area, May 2-4**

| | Total RP | | NCR | | Balance Luzon | | Visayas | | Mindanao | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | rank | % | rank | % | rank | % | rank | % | rank |
| LEGARDA, Loren B. | 59 | 1 | 70 | 1 | 61 | 1 | 60 | 1 | 48 | 1 |
| VILLAR, Manuel Jr. B. | 46 | 2 | 52 | 4-5 | 47 | 3 | 57 | 2 | 32 | 3 |
| ESCUDERO, Francis Joseph G. | 44 | 3 | 64 | 2 | 50 | 2 | 36 | 10 | 28 | 10 |
| PANGILINAN, Francis N. | 42 | 4 | 46 | 6 | 40 | 5 | 55 | 3 | 30 | 4-6 |
| LACSON, Panfilo M. | 39 | 5 | 56 | 3 | 42 | 4 | 33 | 12 | 30 | 4-6 |
| AQUINO, Benigno Simeon III C. | 37 | 6 | 40 | 7 | 38 | 6-7 | 42 | 7 | 29 | 7-9 |
| RECTO, Ralph G. | 36 | 7 | 34 | 12 | 35 | 9 | 49 | 4 | 29 | 7-9 |
| CAYETANO, Alan Peter S. | 35 | 8 | 52 | 4-5 | 37 | 8 | 29 | 14-15 | 25 | 12 |
| ZUBIRI, Juan Miguel F. | 33 | 9-10 | 27 | 15 | 24 | 15 | 48 | 5 | 40 | 2 |
| HONASAN, Gregorio B. | 33 | 9-10 | 39 | 8 | 38 | 6-7 | 23 | 19-20 | 29 | 7-9 |
| ANGARA, Edgardo J. | 32 | 11 | 26 | 16 | 33 | 10 | 40 | 8 | 26 | 11 |
| ARROYO, Joker P. | 31 | 12 | 28 | 14 | 32 | 11-12 | 44 | 6 | 20 | 15-16 |
| SOTTO, Vicente III C. | 28 | 13 | 35 | 10-11 | 32 | 11-12 | 26 | 16 | 17 | 19-20 |
| PIMENTEL III, Aquilino L. | 26 | 14 | 31 | 13 | 26 | 14 | 25 | 17-18 | 22 | 14 |
| DEFENSOR, Michael T. | 25 | 15-16 | 23 | 17 | 23 | 16-17 | 39 | 9 | 16 | 21 |
| TRILLANES, Antonio IV, F. | 25 | 15-16 | 38 | 9 | 28 | 13 | 17 | 21-23 | 19 | 17-18 |
| PICHAY, Prospero JR., A. | 24 | 17 | 14 | 20-21 | 23 | 16-17 | 35 | 11 | 23 | 13 |
| MONTANO, Cesar | 23 | 18-19 | 14 | 20-21 | 19 | 19 | 31 | 13 | 30 | 4-6 |
| ROCO, Sonia M. | 23 | 18-19 | 35 | 10-11 | 22 | 18 | 23 | 19-20 | 17 | 19-20 |
| MAGSAYSAY, Vicente P. | 18 | 20-21 | 13 | 22-23 | 14 | 21-23 | 29 | 14-15 | 20 | 15-16 |
| OSMEÑA, John Henry R. | 18 | 20-21 | 18 | 19 | 14 | 21-23 | 25 | 17-18 | 19 | 17-18 |
| ORETA, Teresa Tao A. | 13 | 22-23 | 10 | 24 | 14 | 21-23 | 17 | 21-23 | 9 | 24 |
| COSETENG, Anna Dominique M. | 13 | 22-23 | 19 | 18 | 15 | 20 | 12 | 24 | 7 | 25 |
| GOMEZ, Richard I. | 12 | 24 | 13 | 22-23 | 13 | 24-25 | 9 | 25 | 11 | 23 |
| SINGSON, Luis C. | 11 | 25 | 6 | 25 | 13 | 24-25 | 17 | 21-23 | 6 | 26 |
| KIRAM, Jamalul D. | 6 | 26 | 2 | 26-29 | 2 | 27-31 | 5 | 27 | 15 | 22 |
| CAYETANO, Joselito P. | 3 | 27-28 | 2 | 26-29 | 3 | 26 | 4 | 28 | 4 | 28 |
| CHAVEZ, Melchor G. | 3 | 27-28 | 1 | 30-35 | 1 | 32-37 | 8 | 26 | 3 | 29 |
| BAUTISTA, Martin D. | 2 | 29-32 | 1 | 30-35 | 2 | 27-31 | 3 | 29 | 2 | 30-32 |
| AQUINO, Theodora M. | 2 | 29-32 | 1 | 30-35 | 1 | 32-37 | 2 | 30-33 | 5 | 27 |
| WOOD, Victor N. | 2 | 29-32 | 2 | 26-29 | 2 | 27-31 | 2 | 30-33 | 2 | 30-32 |
| PAREDES, Zosimo Jesus II M. | 2 | 29-32 | 2 | 26-29 | 2 | 27-31 | 1 | 34-37 | 1 | 33-37 |
| LOZANO, Oliver O. | 1 | 33-38 | 1 | 30-35 | 1 | 32-37 | 2 | 30-33 | 2 | 30-32 |
| STRAY/UND. ++ | 13 | | 14 | | 12 | | 13 | | 14 | |

SOURCE: SOCIAL WEATHER STATIONS

# Iglesia ni Cristo's choice: 6-5-1 for Team Unity

From page A1

me, I assure members of the INC and the Manalo family that my support [for them] will not be lost and will not change."

Eastern Samar Gov. and TU media director Ben Evardone was pleasantly surprised at the reported endorsements.

"The fact that the INC chose six TU bets would shatter the opposition's claim that they would dominate the polls. We're very proud of the six chosen by the INC, but we will continue to work for the other six to meet our target of 12-0," Evardone said.

Candidates traditionally court an endorsement by the INC, whose members vote by bloc.

It has a membership of at least two million—only a fifth of the 10 million required for a senatorial candidate to land in the winning circle of 12, but enough to provide a head start.

Said Lacson: "They may not have chosen me over President Macapagal-Arroyo in the last 2004 presidential election, but I have always respected their wisdom because I know everything always happens in God's time."

Sotto said he was "very grateful."

"The INC scrutinizes well before they choose whom to support," he said.

It's 8-4 in favor of TU in the list of a group of evangelical bishops who pledged to have "millions" of its members vote for its endorsees.

### Bishops' choice

In a press conference yesterday, the Federation of Evangelical Bishops International (FEBI) endorsed Angara, Sotto, Recto, Zubiri, Luis Singson, Prospero Pichay, Cesar Montano and Sultan Jamalul Kiram of TU, and Lacson, Legarda, Escudero and Alan Peter Cayetano of GO.

The FEBI is composed of 157 bishops from different denominations and claims a membership of four million nationwide.

Bishop Efraim Perez, FEBI secretary general, said he and his colleagues expected the majority of their members to vote for their favored candidates. "They trust us," he said.

This is the first time the FEBI has endorsed candidates as one, Perez said. Previously, he said, the bishops individually backed their favored candidates.

### Criteria

The candidates were chosen because they are God-fearing, compassionate, and proenvironment, said Bishop Loreto Layson, FEBI first vice president.

They were subjected to interviews and their track records scrutinized.

"We endorse our list of senatorial candidates not only to our flock but to the entire nation," the bishops said in a statement.

They said that after a period of search and study, "we concluded and stand on their side as their agent to our countrymen as well as to our people to support and help them win."

Asked why they endorsed candidates with a checkered past—such as Singson who was reportedly a "jueteng" lord and Lacson who has faced allegations of human rights violations—the bishops said they were more concerned with the candidates' plans for the future of the country.

Perez said everyone had an imperfect past. He said what was important was that the candidates were prepared to face the future: *"Lahat nang tao ay may pangit na kahapon. Ang mahalaga, handa siyang humarap sa kanyang hinaharap."*

He also said Singson, over whom he and the other bishops prayed, was a member of their community.

Singson, the only candidate who showed up at the press conference, thanked the bishops for their support.

"I am confident that I will join the magic 12," he said.

Perez said the FEBI's only request was that the candidates would live up to the group's values.

If the endorsees win and turn their back on their promise to lead clean lives, "we will come out again in the media to renounce them," he said.

### 5-5-2 for El Shaddai

For El Shaddai's Bro. Mike Velarde, it will be 5-5-2.

Velarde said this mix of administration, opposition and independent candidates would also indicate that the May 14 elections were fair, compared to a TU sweep that he said would be questionable.

"If the elections were really fair and honest, the results would be something like 5-5-2," Velarde told the INQUIRER on Tuesday.

He said he would call one of the biggest El Shaddai rallies ever at Rizal Park on Saturday to present his list of 20 candidates that would include the 12 he would vote for.

Velarde said he had decided to endorse 20 candidates—eight from TU, eight from GO, and four independents—to give El Shaddai members a wide choice.

As in past elections, however, Velarde will not name the 12 candidates he has chosen. But he will give his followers unmistakable clues to their identities when he addresses the Saturday rally.

"The 5-5-2 will be discerned through my body language, which my members easily understand," he said.

### 30 seconds to speak

El Shaddai counts between four and five million members.

Some 300,000 are expected to attend the rally on the eve of the elections, where the senatorial candidates are expected to show up and be given 30 seconds to address the assembly.

Velarde is also expected to use the occasion to campaign for El Shaddai's party-list group Buhay, which advocates the prolife stance of the Catholic Church.

During the rally, about a million sample ballots will be distributed containing the names of the 20 candidates.

The INQUIRER learned from El Shaddai insiders that the 20 candidates were Angara, Arroyo, Pichay, Defensor, Sotto, Recto, Zubiri and Montano from TU; Legarda, Escudero, Villar, Lacson, Aquino III, Sonia Roco, Aquilino Pimentel III and Antonio Trillanes from GO; and independents Honasan, Pangilinan, Dr. Martin Bautista and Adrian Sison.

Bautista and Sison actually belong to the Ang Kapatiran party.

The sources said the first names on the list could constitute Velarde's Magic 12.

### Warning against cheating

Velarde warned against cheating by any party at the polls.

"If there is a perception of anomaly, political instability will persist and this will further discourage investments by both local and foreign investors," he said, adding:

"We should pray for the Comelec (Commission on Elections) officials down to the precinct level to be properly guided and have the interest of the country at heart."

Velarde also said the military should not get involved in the elections.

"The military must realize that politicians come and go but the institution remains. Public support [for the military] is very crucial for the enemies of the state to be eliminated, and the military will have that support if it can show its independence and nonpartisanship," he said.

As for Ms Arroyo, Velarde said: "It's about time we had an apolitical President. After all, she still has three years to do something good for the country and leave a legacy despite her unpopularity. She should be above the political storm because she's not the issue, anyway. She's not running."

# Soldiers pulled out; protesters driven out

From page A1

them to leave the soldiers alone.

"*Lumayas kayo* (Go away)," the residents shouted.

"They apparently knew we would be coming so they had prepared," Manila Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Pabillo told the INQUIRER as he was being escorted out of the compound, a neighborhood of hundreds of poor families.

Half-naked men, grandmothers and children had gathered in front of the multipurpose center, where the soldiers were staying, and prevented the protesters from getting near.

The residents argued that the soldiers were not doing anything wrong but had, in fact, been helping them.

"Before, a lot of people got held up, but crime went down when they arrived," fruit vendor Eden Andales, one of the residents who confronted the militants, told the INQUIRER.

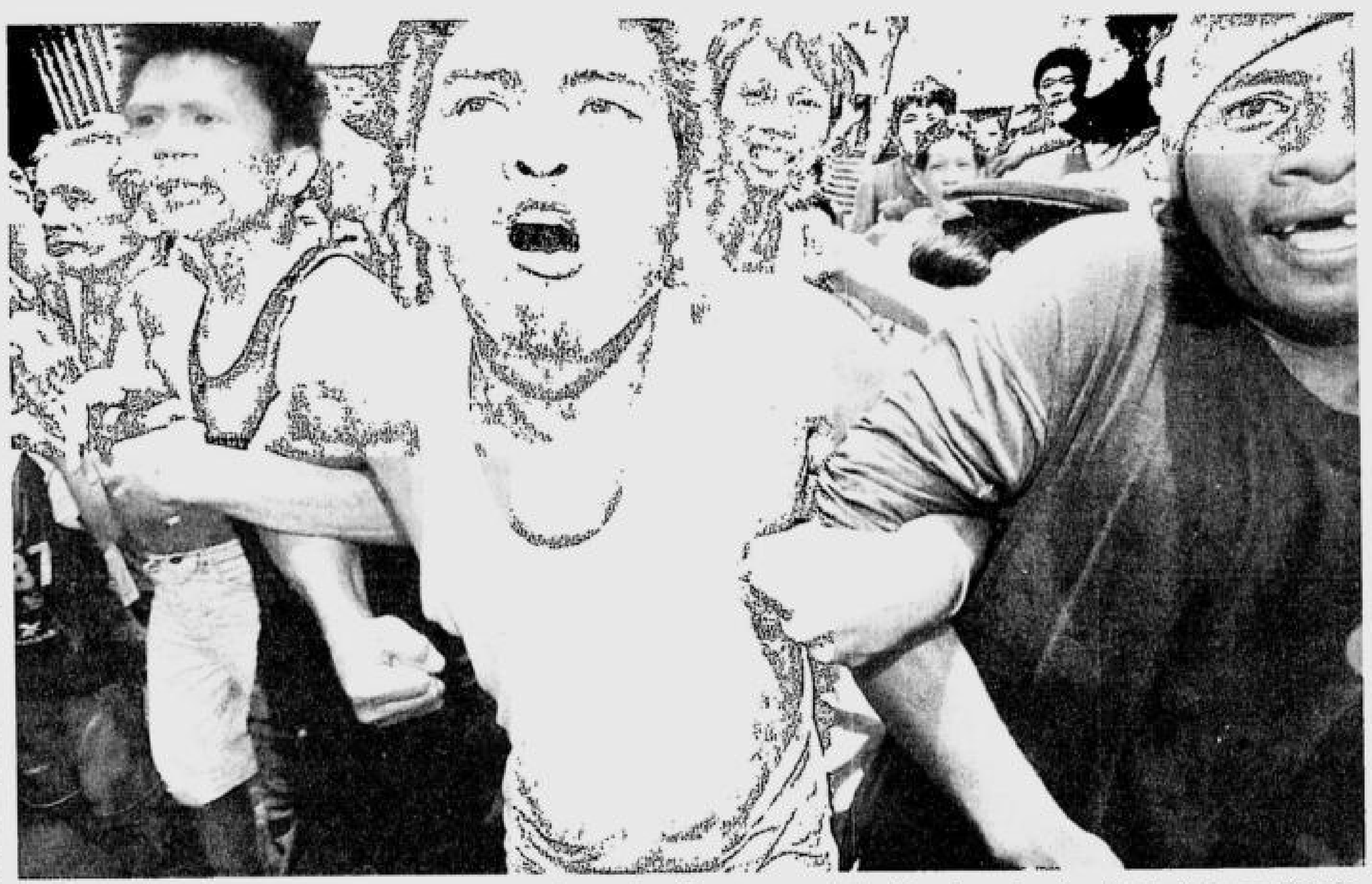
The confrontation occurred after Esperon ordered the pullout of 260 officers and men who had been deployed for six months in 19 depressed barangays.

The deployment of the soldiers had provoked protests from leftist and civil society groups and some residents, who said it was part of a military campaign to intimidate the barangays into voting against party-list groups representing the militant sector.

Esperon told reporters he ordered the soldiers' pullout "to remove suspicion that we are here for election purposes."

The pullout is expected to be completed in four days, or before the May 14 elections.

Braving the scorching heat, the protesters marched through a narrow alley of the Parola Compound, planning to hold a rally in front of a multipurpose center, where seven soldiers were staying.



**LINKING ARMS,** residents of the Parola compound stop the militant groups in their tracks and contradict their demand for the immediate pullout of military troops in the area. REM ZAMORA

### 'We want them here'

"We get feedback that the soldiers were campaigning for certain party-list groups," Caloocan Bishop Deogracias Iniguez Jr. told a news conference before the march began. Iniguez, himself, did not take part in the march.

Some residents were startled when the protesters started chanting. Then they started yelling back.

"We don't want them (the soldiers) to leave," 41-year-old mother Nene said. She said that since the soldiers arrived, the number of robberies and fist fights in their area had dwindled.

The soldiers not only patrolled at night, they also renovated the multipurpose center, built a day-care center and public toilets, and conducted medical missions, they added.

"They have been helping us. Only drug addicts and criminals would want to drive them away," 42-year-old Peter said.

Protest organizers argued that soldiers should be deployed in combat areas in the provinces, and not in the metropolis.

But 32-year-old mother Mary Jane said the nearest police precinct was hundreds of meters away. "They (the police) come here only if we call them, unlike the soldiers who are easy to call," she said.

### Difficult to call cops

Juliet Cezar, another resident, said the soldiers were "much better" than the policemen, who she claimed would arrive only after the criminals had fled.

"It's difficult to call the police," Cezar said, speaking in Filipino, like the other residents. "With soldiers, just one knock on the door and they are awake. We know that's the job of the police, but they can't do it."

The jeers of residents drowned out the protesters' arguments.

In the upper floor of the multipurpose center, three soldiers quietly observed the confrontation.

2nd Lt. Jereco Niwane said his unit had been in the area since December and their job was to "render community development services."

Asked why many residents were defending them, Niwane said: "We don't know."

### Militants surprised

Bishop Pabillo, at a press conference, said the military was not the solution to peace and order problems.

"The military has not learned that peace does not come with might," he said.

A march organizer admitted it was not the kind of confrontation they had expected at the Parola. In their advisories to the media, organizers had hinted of a possible confrontation with the soldiers.

"We were surprised at the residents' reaction," Kabataan party-list member Enrico Almonguerra said in Filipino. "We are now seeing the effects of the deception of the military, (of their claim) that they are here to solve criminality, repair roads and hold medical missions."

Repulsed at the Parola, the protesters moved over to Isla Puting Bato in the Baseco Compound, where they invited residents to an interfaith prayer.

### 'Vestiges of martial law'

In a statement, the Ecumenical Bishops Forum (EBF) said the military's urban presence was part of the "vestiges of martial law."

"There is reason to believe that the deployment of troops in urban areas is directed at suppressing the support of the communities to principled and progressive party-list groups," the EBF statement, read by Bishop Iniguez at the press conference, said.

The EBF is a group of bishops from the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, United Methodist, Episcopal Church in the Philippines, Iglesia Filipina Independiente and the Roman Catholic Churches in the Philippines.

Also yesterday, some 100 members of militant party-list groups rallied at the Plaza Hernandez in Tondo and called for the pullout of soldiers stationed in depressed Metro communities.

Esperon stressed the military had planned the troops' pullout even before the elections.

He said that the deployment program would be reviewed and that he was not sure "whether we will come back" after May 14.

He said it was likely that the military would come back in "small formations" after the elections in order to complete five small projects that the communities had requested them to do.

### Return after poll?

"There are lot of other ways of engaging Metro Manila in other forms," Esperon said.

Esperon spoke to reporters after attending the turnover rites of a day-care center at barangay Commonwealth in Quezon City.

The center was built by soldiers as part of their civic action work.

National Capital Region Command chief Maj. Gen. Ben Dolorfino said there was a 50-50 chance the troops would be back in the communities after the elections.

"The program will be put under study and [the soldiers could return but under] a different approach but accomplishing the same thing," Dolorfino said. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Nathaniel R. Melican*

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## *15,000 cops to guard Metro; to focus on flashpoints*

POLICE SAID YESTERDAY THE 15,000-strong force of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) was enough to ensure peaceful elections in Metro Manila and there was no need to augment the military presence in the metropolis.

"There is no threat to the security of the elections here and there have been no major incidents of election-related violence," said NCRPO spokesperson Supt. Rommel Miranda.

But he admitted that the police were keeping an eye on Pasig, Pasay and Caloocan cities as possible flash points of poll violence.

"These areas have histories of intense political rivalry," Miranda said.

He added that the NCRPO planned to deploy around 6,000 policemen to guard Metro Manila's polling centers.

This force would be composed of 198 graduates from the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA), 448 police trainees and 494 members of the Regional Special Action Unit (RSAU).

There are 725 polling centers and 5.5 million registered voters in Metro Manila. *Alcuin papa*

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# Palace: Car plates used in Burgos kidnap stolen by men linked to Reds

From page A1

was the explanation made to him by Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

An Army colonel said settlers displaced from a railway project in the capital and allied with the communists stole the plates. He dismissed suggestions his men were involved in the Burgos kidnapping.

Ermita called on the military and police to speed up their separate investigations of the disappearance of Burgos, 36, an agriculturist who was training leftist peasant farmers on organic farming. He was abducted from Ever Gotesco Mall in Quezon City on April 28.

Malacañang said it was satisfied with the action of Esperon who had ordered a probe by the AFP's provost marshal in addition to the separate investigations by the Philippine Army and the Philippine National Police.

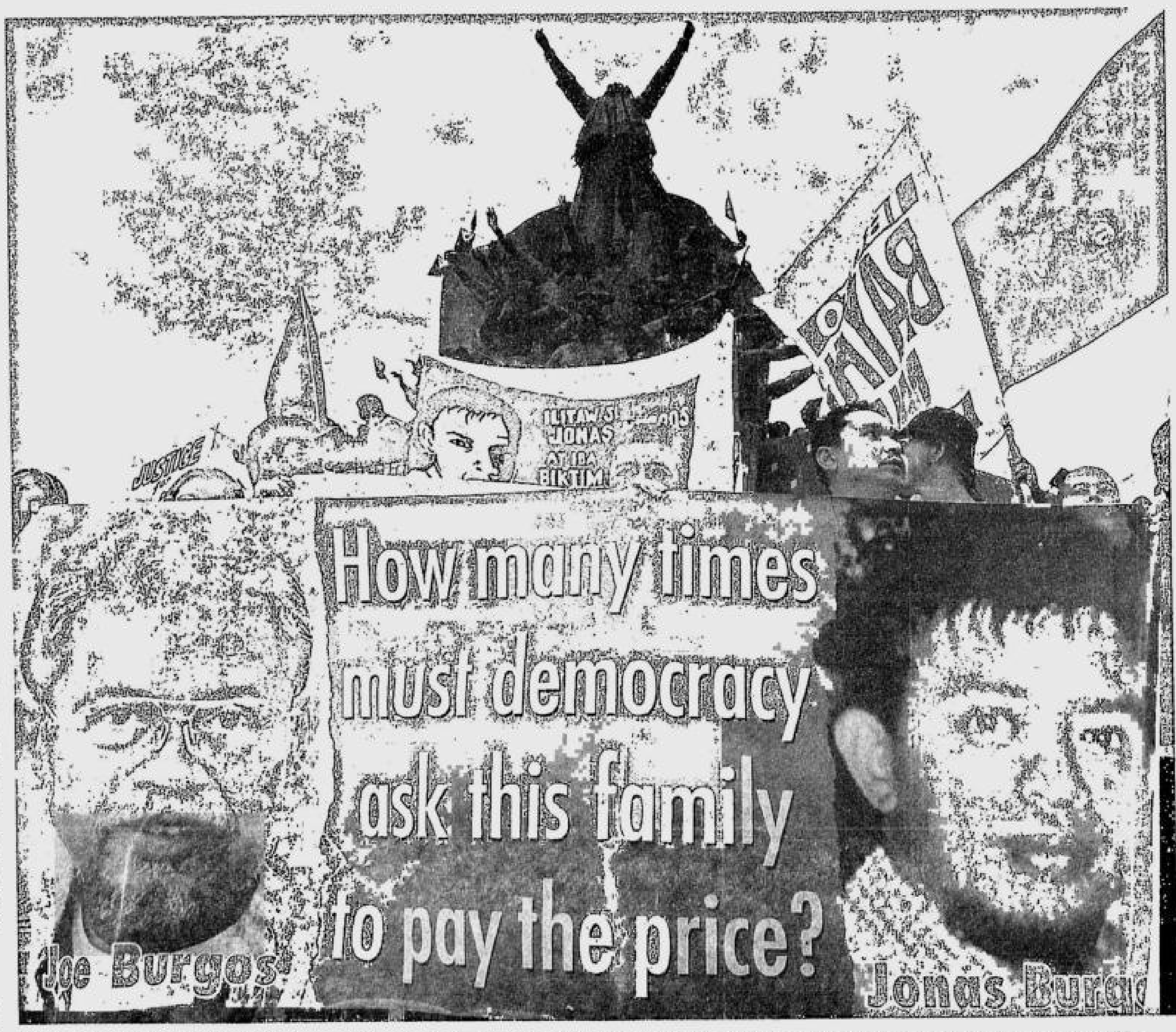
Ermita said he learned from Esperon that the vehicle to which plate no. TAB 194 was issued was impounded in June 2006 by an anti-illegal logging task force of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Army's 56th Infantry Battalion in Bulacan. He said the vehicle remained parked in the place even after the 56th IB left and a smaller unit took over.

### Troublemakers

"Of course no one knew anymore how the plate was removed by somebody but the vehicle is still there, and in fact its engine had already been removed. Only the plate number was stolen," Ermita said.

"You can imagine some troublemakers really took advantage, when everyone was not looking around, to steal the plates and then use it for criminality," Ermita said.

Asked if the military remains a suspect in the abduction, Ermita said: "I can say let the investigation take its normal course. Let's find out what happens later. It's hard for me to make an assumption of what might happen in the investigation."



JUSTICE
ILITAW SI JONAS AT IBA BIKTIM
How many times must democracy ask this family to pay the price?
Joe Burgos
Jonas Burgos

**FREE JONAS MOVEMENT:** Relatives and friends of missing agri-activist Jonas Burgos converge on Camp Crame on Tuesday to protest his disappearance. The son of the late freedom fighter Joe Burgos has been missing for the past 11 days. JOAN BONDOC

But Ermita said Malacañang is not dragging its feet on the Burgos abduction, saying Burgos' father was his longtime friend.

In an interview with defense reporters, Esperon said that initially, he did not see any connection between the military and young Burgos' abduction.

"But now we have that matter to investigate so we have to investigate," he said in reference to the disclosure that the plates used in the kidnapping of Jonas came from a jeep impounded by the Army.

"I don't want to make any conclusion but you can be assured that we are cooperating with the Philippine National Police or other investigating bodies," Esperon said.

Asked whether the latest development in Burgos' case was making the military look bad, Esperon said: "Yes, if that's how you would see it immediately."

But Esperon said that the 56th IB had not been staying in its headquarters from November last year until March as the entire battalion went out for training.

"So we are looking at that. I would not want to make that as an excuse for now but as I said we are investigating the matter and we want to get to the bottom of it," he said.

### Family accuses military

With the latest development, the Burgos family for the first time accused the military of having a hand in the abduction.

"All evidence points to the 56th IB as the suspect. They're the main suspect of the family. The 56th IB, particularly Col. Noel Clement, is our suspect," Jose Luis 'JL' Burgos, Jonas' younger brother, said in a phone interview.

"He should come out and face the public. He should be man enough to face the accusations," he added of Clement, who was the official custodian of the impounded jeep until his tour ended on Jan. 17.

"That's sufficient proof that the military is involved," he said.

### Some settlers ex-rebels

Lt. Col. Melquiades Feliciano, who replaced Clement, said settlers living outside his headquarters probably stole the plates. He said these settlers were members of the urban poor group Kadamay.

He said this group had been organized by the Communist Party of the Philippines and its members came from shanties along the tracks of the North Rail project that had been demolished and occupants resettled at Towerville in Barangay Minuya just behind the 56th IB camp in Norzagaray, Bulacan.

"We have interrogated some of their members before. Some were rebel returnees," Feliciano said in a telephone interview. He said the 56th IB had begun questioning some of the settlers.

Col. Rommel Gomez, commander of the 703rd Infantry Brigade, said he could "not relate the plate number with the abduction."

"A missing plate number in the custody of the Army does not mean the military was behind the abduction," he said. *With reports from Christine O. Avendano, Alcuin Papa, TJ Burgonio, Angela Rebueno and Tonette Orejas and Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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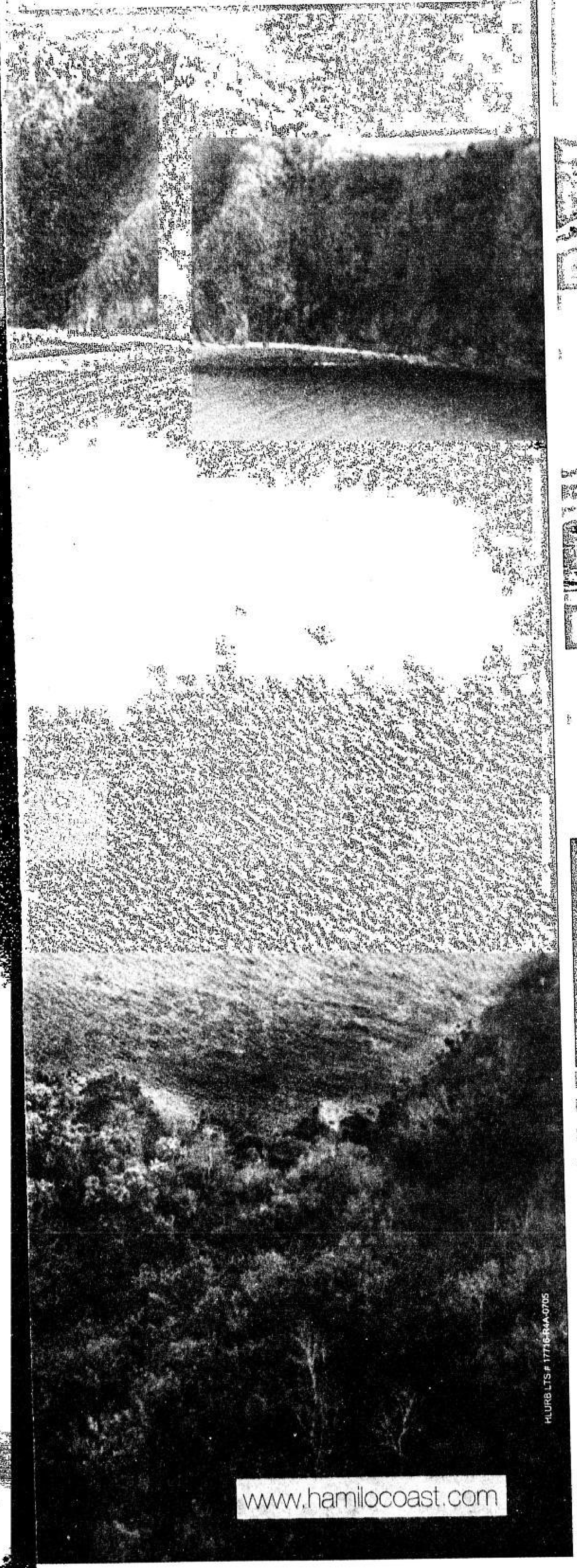

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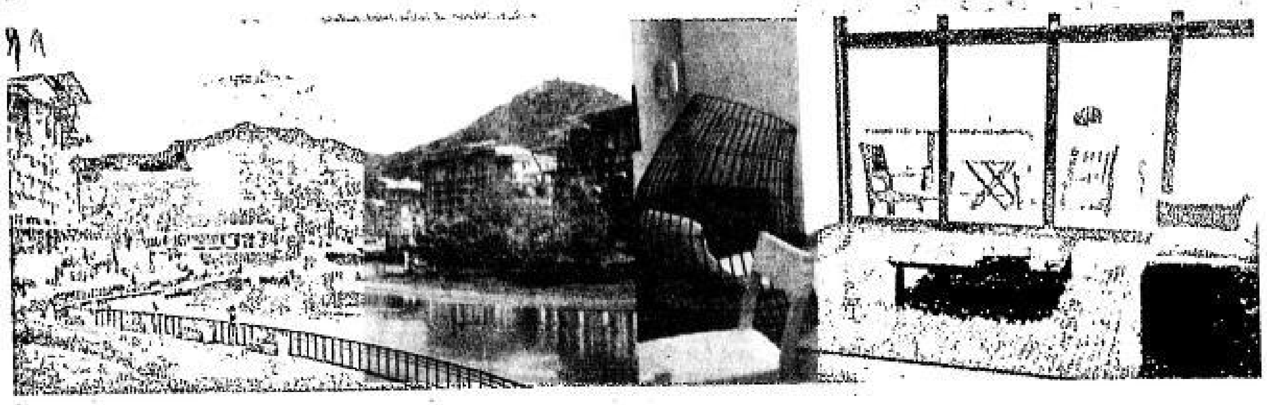

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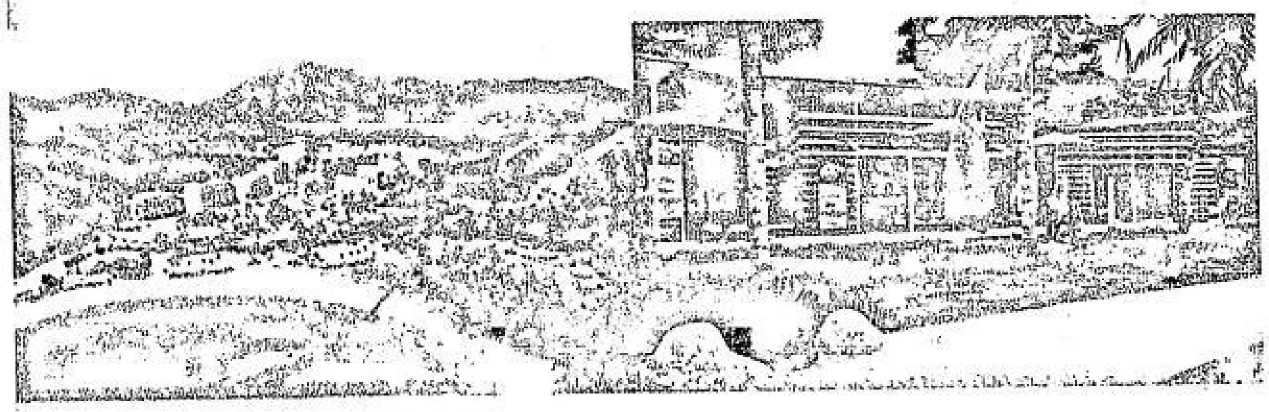

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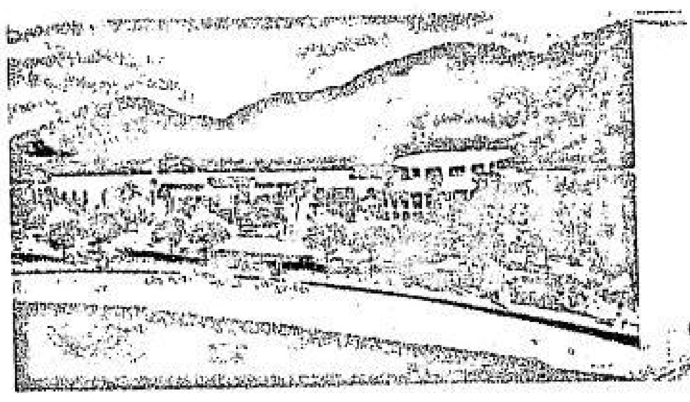

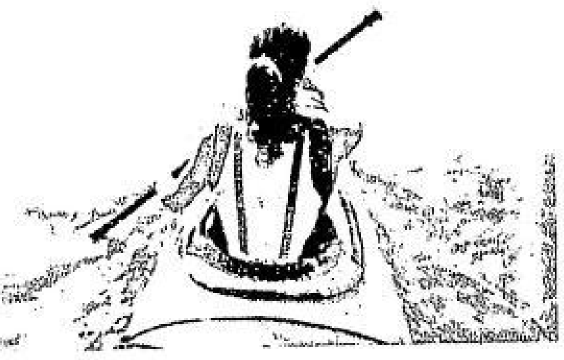

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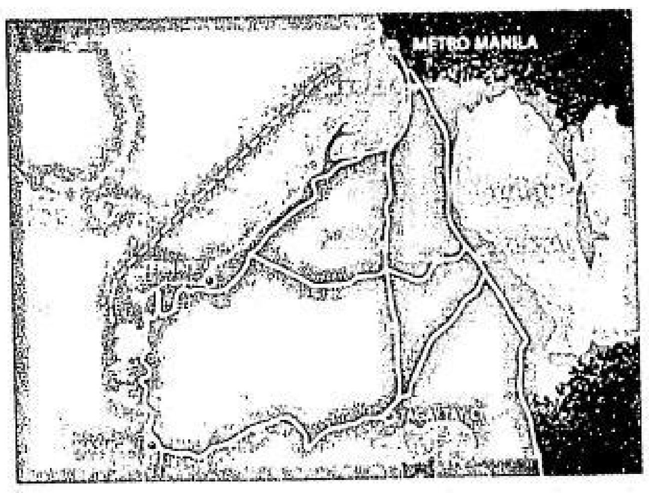

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ISSN 0116-2642
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Vol. 22 No. 151
Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/opinion

# OPINION

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•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.
•Subscription Hotline 896-6000

## One-party rule

**EDITORIAL**

FORGET THOSE SURVEYS SHOWING THE OPPOSITION scoring a huge victory in the Senate race, both administration officials and Team Unity candidates say; at the end of the day, party machinery will prevail over popularity. While the latest surveys show the administration winning not more than 4 of the 12 Senate seats being contested, administration officials confidently predict a major reversal once the votes are counted. Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita sees seven administration candidates getting into the winners' circle. All because the administration coalition has the machinery that will deliver the sample ballots, bring the voters to the precincts and watch over the counting and canvassing of votes.

Without any doubt, the administration coalition has one truly formidable machinery that reaches every corner of the country. The seven parties forming the administration coalition count as members 77 out of the country's 81 provincial governors, 194 out of 228 congressmen, 115 of the 120 city mayors, and over 1,200 of some 1,500 town mayors.

The administration coalition expects to sustain its dominance at the provincial, district and municipal levels in next week's election, with some of its leaders predicting a virtual sweep of the gubernatorial, congressional, city and municipal posts. Already assured of victory are the administration candidates either running unopposed or pitted against candidates belonging to other coalition partners. Ermita has been quoted as saying these sure winners include 78 candidates for governor, 199 candidates for congressmen and 29 candidates for mayor in major cities, All of them are running unopposed or against token opposition.

But will this political juggernaut sweep away the opposition senatorial candidates who have shown strong voter pulling power in the surveys? Only if it will be converted into a mean machine for massive cheating, the Genuine Opposition believes. Opposition spokesmen dismiss all such talk about the superiority of political machinery in delivering victory as an attempt to condition the public to accept surprises in the senatorial race. What is more likely is that these cheating machine will be employed to save the administration from certain—and a very embarrassing—defeat in the senatorial contest, like what happened in the 2004 presidential election, they say.

The opposition might have a point. A more solid, bigger and better-oiled machinery, like Ferdinand Marcos' Kilusang Bagong Lipunan couldn't prevail over the very popular Corazon Aquino in 1986. It would be hard for the public to believe that a porous coalition brought together for the purpose of propping up—and extracting maximum concessions from—an administration whose legitimacy remains in question can perform better than the KBL.

Thus, Malacañang should be careful with what it asks for. It might reap something much worse than what it bargains for if it seeks victory at any cost.

But whatever the outcome of the senatorial elections, there is one other disturbing result of all this coalition-building done by the Arroyo administration. In many cities and towns, the deals cut by politicians have resulted in the fielding of many candidates who are running unopposed, as Ermita has boasted. In the second congressional district of Maguindanao, for instance, administration candidates led by Rep. Simeon Datumong are running unopposed. That lucky bunch include all the 22 candidates for mayor in the district, vice mayors and councilors.

Smart politics? Only in the narrow-minded and selfish view of the politicians. In fact, this Maguindanao district is but an extreme example of what has happened in many places all over the country, where political leaders have simply divided among themselves all the elective positions. In this manner, they have effectively disenfranchised millions of voters by appropriating for themselves the sacred right of the citizens to choose their leaders. If democracy is anchored on the consent of the governed as expressed in free elections, this is not democracy in action. This is one-party rule, not unlike what the old communist regimes used to have. And the Filipino people have the Arroyo administration to thank for it.

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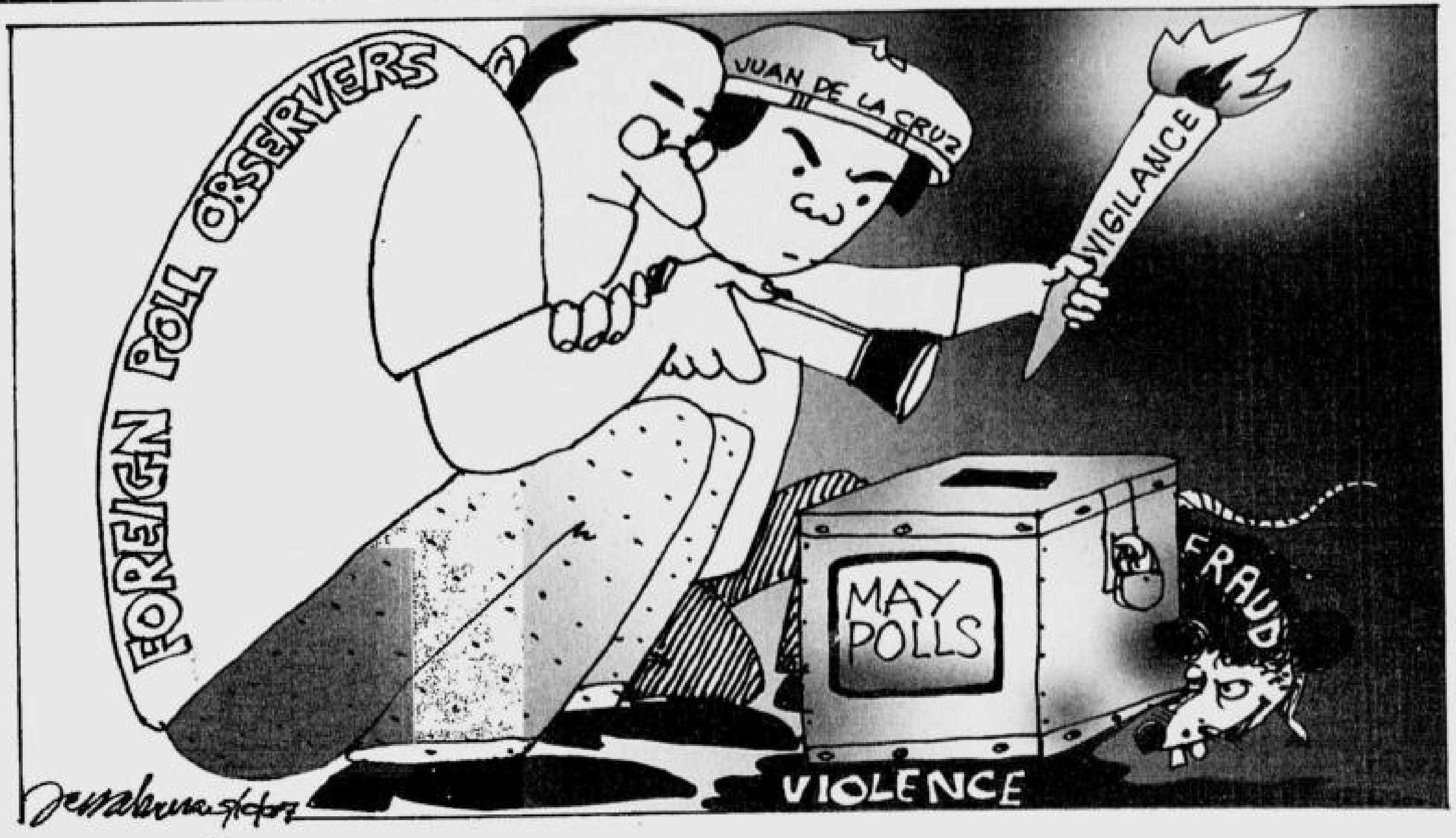


## Who's got the cork?

**VIEWPOINT**

*Juan L. Mercado*

IS "THE GENIE OUT OF THAT CURSED BOTTLE?" asked the INQUIRER's May 6 editorial on summary killings and abductions, as in Jonas Burgos case. "The President gives an order and nothing happens. Or rather, the same thing happens again and again." Shouldn't the question be: Who threw away the cork?

The President keeps the genie bottled, protests Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita. "Biased," he said of Arcbhishop Oscar Cruz's comment that despite the President's "ceremonial investigations," mayhem continues. "The Commander in Chief is no longer in command .... She simply accepts what the military does."

"Comment is free," Manchester Guardian's C.P. Scott once wrote. "But facts are sacred." Spike those bloated tallies of the communist fronts. The fact remains the body count has bolted. Thus, European Union Ambassador Alistair MacDonald reached for an undiplomatic but apt adjective: "shocking."

You'll have to pardon Archbishop Cruz. He's handcuffed to the example set by Pope John Paul II. In Malacañang, the Pontiff told Ferdinand Marcos to his face: "Government cannot claim to serve the common good when human rights are not safeguarded."

"Under Marcos, military murder was the apex of a pyramid of terror—3,257 were killed, 35,000 tortured and 70,000 incarcerated," Alfred McCoy writes in "Closer Than Brothers" (Yale University). "That is lower than Argentina's 8,960 victims but exceeds the 2,115 extrajudicial deaths under General Pinochet in Chile ...The Filipino-English dialect coined the neologism 'salvaging' to capture the aura of terror...

"The armed forces were no longer the servant of the state .... Brutal and brutalized, the genie became the bastion of a particular regime." Young lieutenants—Gringo Honasan, Rodolfo Aguinaldo, Victor Batac and others—tortured in "national security's" name. "The Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group produced some of the most fearsome and brutal cops in memory .... Panfilo Lacson joined MISG right after his PMA graduation and rose through its ranks, for the next 15 years, on a fast track to national police power."

As in Argentina and Chile, the military here wrung—from the fragile post Edsa One democracy—impunity for crimes and coups. "Torturers were transformed into heroes." And despite lonely protests from Sen. Franklin Drilon, amnesty was given even for the "death squads of PMA graduates led by their barons," the study adds.

Impunity has consequences. The masterminds of Benigno Aquino's murder haven't been brought to book. And its legacy spans generations. The Magdalo mutineers were a handful, editor Marites Vitug says in a Christian Science Monitor interview. Many officers work by constitutional values. But others continue to see themselves "as a fiefdom outside normal national law." This lack of accountability stokes some of the country's long-running conflicts.

Impunity, surging through a weak state, wracked by insurgency and resurgent political warlords, triggered bloodlust.

Orphaned by People Power I, communist leaders unleashed pogroms: "Kadena de Amor" in Quezon-Bicol (1982), "Kampanyang Ahos" in Mindanao (1985-86), "Operations Missing Link" in Southern Tagalog (1988) "Olympia" in Metro Manila (1998-99), among others. Commissars acted as prosecutors, judges and executioners.

How many victims did that psychotic nightmare claim? In a 2003 INQUIRER interview, former Communist Party (CPP) chair Rodolfo Salas estimates that 1,800 were executed. University of the Philippines Professor Walden Bello figures 700 killed in purges that netted five agents. Who knows? All the graves have not been located yet.

A decimated CPP ultimately halted the slaughter. But communists who quit the movement were salvaged to terrify others. Romulo Kintanar, Felimon "Popoy" Lagman and Arturo Tabara were cut down. "It's sometimes necessary to kill the chicken to scare the monkey," Jose Maria Sison quoted Mao to justify Kintanar's murder. But Kintanar's widow screamed at Sison: "Stop playing god."

Like the Khmer Rouge executioners, the pogrom killers haven't been held to account. Some are button-down executives in Makati today, survivors say. Reps. Satur Ocampo, Teodoro Casiño, Liza Masa are deaf to the pleas of relatives crying out to locate killing-field graves.

"The defense of human rights and human dignity ... has to be impartial, irrespective of religious belief or ideology," Catholic bishops noted in their 2006 statement. That includes areas barely touched upon by the Melo Commission or the UN's Alston report, like the executions in Mayor Rodrigo Duterte's Davao and Mayor Tomas Osmeña's Cebu.

In 2007, summary executions rippled out from Davao City to Davao del Norte and Davao Oriental, the Human Rights Commission says. Some 147 were killed in 2005, the US State Department reported. In Cebu City, the body count is 173 today. "Pervasive weakness in rule of law, official impunity, and the wide disparity between rich and poor contributed to cynicism about official justice."

Cebu's death squads improved on Davao's: Two motorcycle teams back up for the pointman and executioners. Bounties are clipped from businessmen for community security. "Greater love than this no man hath than to lay down" someone else's life for my peace and order.

Now, 99 judges will start to handle cases of salvaging and abductions. Decisions must be handed down within 30 days. This is welcome. Their performance will show whether impunity is ending. And maybe, just maybe, we'll find that cork.

*(E-mail: juanlmercado@gmail.com)*

## Again, good and evil

**THERE'S THE RUB**

*Conrado de Quiros*

OUR NEWSPAPER HEADLINED IT AT ONE point as People Power blowing across the length and breadth of Pampanga. And in many ways it's true. The winds of change are howling fiercely there courtesy of a Catholic priest running for governor.

He has captured the imagination of the Kapampangans and they're rallying around him like the Jews rallied around Jesus on Palm Sunday. One can only hope he doesn't suffer the same fate. But there seems little reason to believe the voters themselves will turn against him like Judas for 30 pieces of silver.

The priest is Fr. Eddie Panlilio, and he is running against Pampanga's best—or worst. They are Pampanga's best only in the sense of *tocino*: They're dead meat that has held off decay with *salitre*, a preservative that's used in gunpowder. Otherwise they're the worst in that they represent the worst of *trapo* politics, one that raises an altar to gambling and shameless groveling before Malacañang. Panlilio is running against the Lapid and Pineda factions, both moneyed, both powerful, both loathed by Kapampangans. And he isn't just surviving, he is thriving.

He has certainly captured the imagination of many of my friends, Kapampangan and otherwise, who have flocked to his side and are campaigning for him for free. For the first time in a long time, they think they can glimpse light in the horizon for Pampanga after a long, moonless, and seemingly endless night. My hopes go with them.

I must confess that the first time I heard that a priest was running for governor of Pampanga, I was two minds about it. I had always assumed there was a law against it, one explicitly attached to the constitutional clause on the separation of Church and State. I was astonished to find, after asking my lawyer friends, that there was none. If a Protestant minister or Muslim imam can run for public office, so can a Catholic priest.

Despite that discovery, I was still two minds about clergy running for public office. If a priest can run for public office, so can a bishop, or an archbishop, or a cardinal. And if they can run for governor, they can run for president. There is no legal impediment against it. There is only a moral one, which is *delicadeza*, a thing that is fast disappearing in this country, if it hasn't done so already. But which poses a humongous dilemma: Can you imagine Cardinal Sin as the president of this country? Or among the living, Cardinal Rosales or Cardinal Vidal? Or indeed Bishop Capalla? They can always declare disobedience, civil or uncivil, to be a mortal sin. And there would be no escaping them: They can always carry their political messages to the pulpit.

I can only hope that if Panlilio wins as governor of Pampanga, he does not poke a hole in the dam for the floodwaters of clergy-turning-politician to burst through—the way Erap's success in San Juan did for entertainers.

But these are desperate times which call for desperate measures. With lying and stealing rioting in this country, or indeed with murder and mayhem sweeping across the country like a scythe, I'll take my chances with this. Panlilio at least offers the hope of ending a reign of evil where he is.

But that brings us to an all-important question, which is: why something like this is happening in Pampanga but not elsewhere. Why is Panlilio thriving where those who are proffering themselves as the alternative in national politics are not? Why is an Edsa of sorts raging across Pampanga and not in Edsa? The situation looks pretty much the same: This country is also run by two factions of dead meat that have staved off decay with the preservative of gunpowder. Why are the national "alternatives" not capturing the imagination of the people, enough for them to go out into the streets with fire in their bellies and hope in their hearts?

It helps, of course, that Panlilio is a priest, and one with a track record for doing well by the community. That is no small matter for a country that continues to regard the clergy highly, notwithstanding the scandals that have hounded them through the centuries. And it helps that Panlilio has put a face to the "alternative." By all accounts, he is a charismatic figure, though one wonders how hard it can be to radiate charisma when put side by side with Lito Lapid's and Bong Pineda's own. True enough, we're very "personalistic" and like to see faces accompany causes.

But neither explanation really catches the heart of it. As I keep saying, Edsa II didn't have a face to go with it—certainly it was not GMA's; had it been so, Edsa II would never have happened. What animated it was a storyline that Filipinos have always profoundly identified with, the storyline of Good vs. Evil. It is not enough for the alternative to be a reasonable choice, an opposing agenda, or another way of doing things. In a country particularly ravaged by Evil, it has to take on the mythic proportions of Good—a hero that shimmers with dazzling purity, a quest that calls for lofty ideals and not just intellectual commitment, a journey that offers a *Pasyon*—like passage from death to life, from sin to salvation.

That is what Panlilio has done. His being a priest is incidental, his turning the fight from a merely political, or indeed, electoral one, to a deeply moral, or indeed spiritual life-and-death one, is central. His putting a face to an alternative is incidental; his offering a spark of hope, fanned to a stark brilliance by the very desolation and darkness of his surroundings, is central. That has always been the secret of Edsa, which is why something like it is happening all over again in Pampanga.

There's a lesson to be drawn from that lahar-strewn land, like the wondrous artworks made by the Kapampangans themselves from ash and rock.

# A 'people's crusade' in Pampanga

## POLITICAL TIDBITS

### *Belinda Olivares-Cunanan*

I SPENT THE ENTIRE AFTERNOON LAST TUESday in Betis-Guagua, Pampanga to see for myself the political phenomenon everyone's talking about there: the "people's crusade" of "Among Ed Panlilio," candidate for governor. *Among* (Kapampangan word for "father") Ed, wearing jeans and his campaign T-shirt, his hair closely cropped, rode on a truck with a makeshift roof, waving to the crowds or bending down to receive the "*mano po*" of children. The motorcade had just pulled out and people were waiting for him under the hot sun at 2 or 3 p.m. along narrow streets, holding up homemade "Among Ed placards" and waving white ribbons (symbol of his purity); and on their homes, streamers hung, some well-made donations, but most of them homemade. The convoy grew longer and longer as his lively jingles woke up more people from their *siesta*.

* * *

**This campaign is phenomenal. It started out with no big leaders, just eager folks. But as the campaign gathered steam on the strength of volunteerism and donations from people from all walks of life, local candidates deserted their parties and affiliated with him. One of them is Lakas mayoral candidate Emil Capati of Guagua.**

**A group of concerned Kapampangans was searching for acceptable alternative to Lilia "Baby" Pineda and Gov. Mark Lapid, both of whom are tainted by controversy. The search group, which Among Ed joined in its third meeting, sought out prominent Kapampangans, such as former education secretary Ping de Jesus of Bacolor, retired Chief Justice Art Panganiban of Candaba, Prof. Randy David of Betis-Guagua, former Neda chief Dante Canlas of Sto. Tomas, and former vice governor Cielo Macapagal-Salgado of Lubao. But none of them wanted to run.**

**Finally, the search focused on Among Ed. Pampanga Archbishop Paciano Aniceto joined the search because he didn't want his priest to run. Among Ed asked for a week of discernment and prayer, and he began to see his candidacy as a "moral obligation." Besides, his "advantage" over his opponents is that he bears "the conscience of the people," he said. He also saw it as a way to concretize the CBCP's guidelines for good governance and against corruption. Grudgingly Aniceto consented and granted him a temporary leave from his priestly duties.**

* * *

Among Ed has won the endorsement of various religious groups, such as Jesus is Lord, El Shaddai, Dating Daan, Aglipayan and Methodist churches and the United Church of Christ. The Iglesia ni Kristo support is expected this week. The candidate had told the various religious leaders to visit him regularly at the Capitol and "knock me on the head if they see something I'm not doing right." His leaders said he's doing well except in Pineda's bailiwicks, such as Lubao, Floridablanca and Candaba, where his campaign is carried out in "whispers." His leaders also said his chief rival is not Lilia Pineda but her husband Bong who, for the first time, is really "moving." Among Ed said he hasn't received any call from the President and that he met Rep. Mikey Arroyo only once, at the signing of the peace covenant in San Fernando Cathedral.

What if his rivals try to buy off the voters? An old lady supporter said some people might accept, but they'd still vote for Among Ed as they really love him. People said they'll guard his votes on Monday. Pampanga's crusaders can do nothing less.

* * *

**Several people, including retired military officers headed by a Marcos-era general, have been warning in recent days about cheating in the coming elections. Unfortunately they do not offer a shred of evidence, though they insist that the administration's cheating apparatus is already in place. This allegation is seemingly aimed at destroying the credibility of the elections this early. Credible elections are everyone's primordial concern; this is the reason Namfrel, PPCRV and other citizens' groups are calling for volunteers to guard the integrity of the elections.**

**Accusing only one side of plotting to cheat, without presenting any evidence, is irresponsible especially since, historically, we all know that cheating has been done by various groups. This allegation may be coming from the realization that with the disunity in the opposition, its lack of candidates in many places, its funding woes and its single agenda of ousting GMA, GO may not win the trumpeted Senate majority. The administration doesn't have to cheat: all it needs is to move its formidable grassroots machinery.**

* * *

Team Unity senatorial candidate and former presidential chief of staff Mike Defensor, wanting to make sure he gets into the magic circle of 12, came out with a new TV ad with a more serious content. It shows off plain folk complaining that nothing gets done for the poor because of intense political bickering. Along comes Defensor zeroing in on housing, his main advocacy as former chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council and the core of his legislative agenda. The next scene shows him carrying a child with poor folk behind him, marching to a cluster of medium-rise tenements built beside Smokey Mountain. It projects Defensor as a man of action who does what he promises; and closes with an emotional tug: an old lady murmurs to him, "Ipagdadasal kita," and he hugs her with "*Salamat, Nay.*"

* * *

**That adage about journalism being history in a hurry is no truer than at the point when the campaign period races to its end. Two errors in my write-up about the bout between Lakas and Kampi in Davao del Norte: the Lakas gubernatorial candidate, former governor and former president of the League of Governors, Rodolfo del Rosario, is running against Gov. Yayung Gementiza of GO, not Yayung Bautista; the Team Unity rally held in Panabo, Davao del Norte, last Tuesday night was hosted by Rep. Tony Boy Floirendo, not by former governor Del Rosario.**

# Lola Masing, comfort woman

## HUMAN FACE

### *Ma. Ceres P. Doyo*

TOMASA DIOSO SALINOG OF SAN JOSE, Antique, one of World War II's many so-called "comfort women" in Asia who suffered sexual abuse under the Japanese Imperial Army, died of multiple organ failure last April 6. She was 78.

I met Lola Masing at the International Military War Crimes Tribunal held in Tokyo in 2000. Lola Masing led a dozen former comfort women from the Philippines and joined dozens from several Asian countries (China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, East Timor, South Korea, among them) who bravely testified. A Dutch woman victim and a contrite former Japanese soldier also told their stories.

I remember that gathering to be a heart-rending occasion. Aging women went up the stage to testify, sometimes weeping, fainting, while old footage, photos and documents on the atrocities were being flashed to serve as backdrop. Some women from China who managed to attend were victims of the infamous "Rape of Nanking," a well-documented historical tragedy.

Lola Masing was only 13 in 1942 when Japanese soldiers broke into their house and took her away. The soldiers beheaded her father when he tried to save his only daughter.

"For two years," Lola Masing narrated in her March 2007 letter to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, "I was kept as a slave to be raped and abused by Japanese soldiers. They took away the only member of my family. Alone, in abject poverty and with no one to take care of me, I could not go back to school and had to work in order to survive. The war and sexual slavery destroyed my life and my future…

"Despite my poverty and poor health, I rejected the Asian Women's Fund. The atonement being offered … could not compensate for the violation of my rights as a woman and the grievous crimes that were committed against me. The government of Japan should be accountable for its responsibility for what the Japanese military did…

"I am appealing to you, Prime Minister Abe, to acknowledge the truths we have told. This is the justice I have been longing and praying for. We are aware of Japan's efforts for peace but there can be no peace in this world unless there is justice. I hope justice will come before I die."

Lola Masing remembered being brought to a house near the garrison on Gobierno St. where she was raped and abused. The garrison was under the 170th Battalion, 4th Company of the Independent Infantry Regiment. After several months in captivity, the young Tomasa managed to escape. But in 1943, she was recaptured by a Col. Okumura who brought her to a house where she remained as a comfort woman and all-around worker. Okumura and his friends would take turns abusing her.

Lola Masing's ordeals were similar to those of Lola Rosa Henson of Pampanga, the first comfort woman to emerge from the shadows and tell her story.

In November 1992 Lola Masing also emerged to tell her story. More women followed suit. In 1993, Japanese lawyers interviewed Lola Masing in Antique so that a petition could be filed in a Japanese court. With 17 other Filipino survivors, a case was filed at the Tokyo District court. On Oct. 15, 1993, Lola Masing and Lola Rosa presented their opening disposition at the first oral hearing. Her statement:

"I decided to file a lawsuit because I know this is one way to obtain justice for the wrong done to me by the Japanese Imperial Army. My testimony, as well as that of other comfort women, points to the fact that a war crime of rape and sexual slavery had been committed against us.

"As a surviving victim of war, I can only offer my experience to serve as a lesson for all governments and the international community that wars bring only violence, and women become the most violated human beings in times of war.

"I demand from the Japanese government to fulfill its legal responsibility, sincerely apologize and grant compensation to all victims of sexual slavery. Justice cannot be fully served unless the Japanese government faces its responsibility."

In 1996, Lola Masing joined the "Victims Reject-Stop the Asian Women's Fund Assembly." This was to stress that the Japanese government should not escape its responsibility by channeling the compensation through a non-government group.

Japan's Supreme Court dismissed the women's petition on Dec. 25, 2002. Lola Masing went to Tokyo in 2005 to speak at the opening of the Women's Active Museum in Tokyo.

There were Japanese individuals who came to Lola Masing's aid and take care of her needs. Among them was Fr. Paul Kazuyoshi Okura, head of the Catholic Archdiocesan Committee for Justice and Peace. A modest house was built for Lola Masing in Antique so she could grow old with dignity. Fr. Okura's father was a Japanese soldier who fought in the Philippines and later took his own life.

Fr. Okura's moving tribute: "Lola Masing was drawn up to heaven on Good Friday (2 p.m. in the Philippines, 3 p.m. in Tokyo), on the day (and time) Jesus Christ offered his life as savior of mankind. I would like to honor the memory of Lola Masing in prayer for forgiveness for the gravest crime Japan has committed.

"I place my heart into praying that Lola Masing be united with Tatsue Takashima (the lovely Japanese woman who chaired the support network and visited Antique several times) and everyone who had passed away before her, so that she will become one thousand winds from San Jose and fly above us."

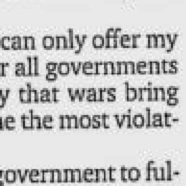
The Antique provincial government's museum recently included Lola Masing's life in its opening exhibit, said Susan Macabuag, a women's advocate who had been taking care of Lola Masing's needs.

You could read the essay I wrote on the comfort women in volume 7 (page 110) of the 10-volume "Kasaysayan: The Story of the Filipino People." Here, the long-denied ignominious chapter was first written into history.

* * *

*Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph*

# Paying the piper



## THE LONG VIEW

### *Manuel L. Quezon III*

WHEN NATIONAL TREASURER IMAR CRUZ resigned, he told the press "Until you come up with a new set of tax measures you will not generate revenue annuity." The government's budget deficit goal for this year is P63 billion, a "reasonable target," Cruz said. Ricky Carandang, in his must-read blog (http://www.rickycarandang.com) points out that while the government's deficit target for the first quarter of this year was P46 billion, the actual deficit was P52 billion.

To cover the deficit, Cruz said the government could continue selling assets to compensate for its inability to collect as much as it spends. But Carandang says that if government is to meet its deficit goal, it can only incur a deficit of P11 billion over the remaining nine months of this year, or 1.2 billion a month. But this is a year that government itself says will be marked by increased spending: and not just for the hidden, and massive, costs of its national and local campaign.

When President Macapagal-Arroyo signed the national budget last March, she proclaimed it was "social payback time." The budget, she crowed, would have more money allocated for the things she'd scrimped on in the past—such as education, health, and so on. Things that all along were essential to the public but were unessential in terms of the fiscal bottom line, the shrinking of which she needed to do, to keep the foreign rating agencies happy.

So add it all up. Social payback, as included in the budget, will, among others, raise government salaries; infrastructure payback, as listed in her 21 priority infrastructure projects; military payback, by way of an increase in military spending to keep the generals happy.

It will also be political payback time. Our President, famously low in charisma, can't get people to go that extra mile out of love or admiration for her. She has to pay—and pay, and pay. Let's assume all the usual covert sources for funds ("intelligence" and other funds hidden in the budget) will be mined for election spending: There's still the coming costs of the eventual musical chairs in the House of Representatives, when the Palace deems the time ripe to install Luis Villafuerte as Speaker; the bureaucratic costs of accommodating generals in government after they retire from the service; the coming costs of a new round of Charter change, including another manufactured people's initiative.

Now in his entry on the deficit, Ricky Carandang says government has to deal with a couple of harsh realities. First, the stronger peso means Customs collects less: where every million dollars in customs duties collected once amounted to P56 million, now it's worth 47.5 million or so. Add to this what Carandang calls the "silent protest" by BIR and Customs collectors: they resent reforms, but instead of risking life and limb by protesting, they're simply not collecting.

This not only means less income for the government. This is a kind of anarchy in these two government agencies: collectors have become a law unto themselves, obeying no one, while bearing down hard on everyone they deal with. You only have to ask people who deal with the two agencies to know the depths of public resentment against them—a resentment people are afraid to publicize.

When Cruz's resignation was announced, FinanceAsia.com noted that his shoes will be hard to fill—and that a wait-and-see attitude concerning the country is appropriate for now. Standard and Poor's is expected to say something nice—but is also waiting until after the elections. It won't be business as usual.

Chronically in debt, people and government are perpetually pawning something—or selling something off—to meet the next round of bills. Eventually though, Cruz pointed out, the family silver will run out and government will have nothing left to pawn or sell. Or put another way, it may have enough family silver to sell between now and 2010. Government could conceivably try selling Transco again; it could sell its stake in Meralco and San Miguel. And tide the deficit over until 2010. But that's presuming every time something's for sale, someone will snap it up. But look at the botched Transco bidding. Never underestimate government's capacity for incompetence. Sooner or later, the talk in official circles—egged on by the foreign ratings agencies—will involve raising taxes.

For all these things—looming big ticket expenses, big political gambits, selling government assets and raising taxes—you need a government that the public believes is in a position to call for sacrifice because it is trusted not to monkey around with the numbers that are the basis for increased spending.

Only a government with an iron-clad electoral mandate can do that. Only a government whose facts and figures are trustworthy—whether in terms of the number of votes, the number of students in comparison to their classrooms, the number that has disappeared under mysterious circumstances—can ask the public to trust it to sell government assets, raise taxes, and spend the proceeds wisely and fairly.

And in the end, this is what the debate will boil down to, when all the issues start coming together. A messy election—involving an armed forces led by politician-generals, administered by a Comelec that makes its Marcos-era predecessor look saintly in comparison, with enough high-profile local and national races tainted by Palace-led efforts to subvert the public will—is not an effective way to lay the foundations for covering government's future income shortfalls. Taxation, indirect or not, without representation, is tyranny. And the lesson of this election is that representation is something government can't afford to leave up to the public to determine

# One rainy Friday

## YOUNG BLOOD

### *Adelette H. dela Paz*

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.*

IT WAS A RAINY FRIDAY, WHEN I FIRST MET HIM. THE glass windows of our office were rattling as strong winds blew and the rain sloshed angrily on the glass. He walked into the room where we were chatting impatiently while waiting for their group to arrive.

He was a ray of sunshine on that stormy day. He was smiling his cheery smile, his dimpled cheeks so enticingly romantic that I couldn't take my eyes off him. He had an aura of intelligence so very rare among the men I usually deal with. And when he approached to introduce himself to us, I knew I had already fallen for him.

When he repeated my name, he looked deep into my eyes and seemed to probe the very depths of my being. I could almost feel him exploring the corners of my mind and I shivered with the sudden awareness.

We shook hands. His were warm and dry while mine were cold and clammy. I couldn't bring myself to look again into his eyes because I was so sure he'd see how I felt. My eyes have always been expressive and I couldn't take the chance of him catching a glimpse of the turmoil inside me.

The next day, I broke up with Leo, my boyfriend of two years. I was so sure of how I felt for the other guy. My feelings for Leo paled in comparison to what I felt for him.

The breakup was not a pleasant one. Leo didn't take it calmly, which was what I expected since we already had many plans for our future together. But I was sure of my decision. I knew what I wanted and I knew who I wanted to be with. And it was not Leo.

After that, things started to develop into something more between the other guy and me. He would often look up from his table at the office and stare unknowingly at me. I would catch him watching me walk from one end of the office to another. I would feel his eyes watch my lips move whenever I spoke on the phone near his table.

Whenever he spoke to me, he would insert personal questions entirely unrelated to our topic of conversation. He wanted to know what my plans were. He wanted to know my dreams no matter how small they seemed. He wanted to know what made me happy and what made me sad. He made it his business to know my future plans and my heart's desires for reasons that were not fully clear to me then. I did not ask why he was so interested; I was sure I knew the answer.

My days were filled with stolen glimpses of him, too. I watched him speak to applicants for jobs in our company. I listened to his questions and explanations and marveled every time at the intelligence behind them. I watched him soothe the feelings of those who did not pass the rigid interviews and I wished so many times that it was me he was comforting.

My nights were no better than my days. I would think of him endlessly and could hardly sleep. I would cry hot tears of longing and in the morning, I would pretend as if nothing happened.

I knew that he knew how I felt. Our glances were unmistakable. It was hell waiting for him to come to me first and confess his feelings. It was torture having him near when I couldn't express fully what I felt inside. But it made me feel alive. It made me realize that I was still human, capable of loving deeply and of being hurt immensely.

It was also on a rainy Friday when everything came apart for me. That day, his wife and son came to our office to fetch him.

I almost fainted in surprise and dismay when I realized that he already had his little family. I didn't know. My feelings for him left no space for the thought that he might not be free to love another. In the little imaginary world I had created for us, there was no one else but him and me.

I let go completely after that, painfully turning down his tempting offer of an extra-marital affair. It's not that I didn't want him, it was more because I cared for him too much to let him ruin his family life. I couldn't hold on anymore, anyway. There was so much he didn't say, so much he had left unknown. The thread that bound him and me was so thin and flimsy. As e.e. cummings once wrote, "Nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands."

*Adelette H. dela Paz, 28, is a recruitment coordinator at a private firm.*

**NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:**

*Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.*

## THEY SAID

### Bad taste

"It is not enough that the Armed Forces say they do not have anything to do (with the kidnapping). They should really look at who really abducted (Jonas). What leaves a bad taste in the mouth is that peaceful reformers are being abducted. They are not armed rebels, they are not waging an armed struggle."

***—Sen. Joker Arroyo on the kidnapping of Jonas Burgos***

### French rescue

"The people of France have chosen change. Those who have been broken, those who have been worn down by life, must know they have not been abandoned, that they will be helped, they will be rescued."

***—Newly-elected France President Nicolas Sarkozy in his victory speech***

### Vote of courage

"Voters need to be helped in resisting attempts to stop them from voting, to exchange their votes for money or favors, or to cow them into fear. Let us assert our right to choose the leadership we want. Let us vote according to our conscience."

***—Pampanga gubernatorial candidate Fr. Eddie Panlilio in a press statement on "Operation Courage," a campaign for a fraud-free elections***

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# Why gov't doesn't care for public school teachers

ERNESTO PINEDA, IN A LETTER, suggested that teachers should be given special privileges. (INQUIRER, 4/28/07) I agree with him.

Let me cite some of the issues that concern us most.

I've been a public school teacher since June 1994 and I have come to believe that teachers are the most neglected and least privileged government employees.

After 12 years in the service, I have yet to receive my long-overdue loyalty pay, a privilege that employees in other government agencies promptly enjoy.

Our salary increases are not given to us as a matter of course. We have to beg for it. Our meager benefits are delayed and we are told that the reason for this is that we belong to the biggest department.

Our politicians remember us teachers and the sorry state of the public school system only during election time. After elections, the teachers are forgotten.

While other government workers enjoy plentiful allowances and perks on top of their hefty pay, we are cash-starved—our salaries given on a monthly basis, often delayed yet. Thus, we have become regular clients of loan sharks. No wonder even the ATMs of many of my colleagues are pawned. Indeed, our take home pay barely meets our family's basic needs if, at all, it is enough to take us home.

Our once-a-year medical examination is just a formality. We even have to dip into our own pockets to pay for X-ray and urinalysis. The dental examination, too, is just for record purposes. How sad, the majority of us can't afford decent health care.

Contrary to public perception, we are not on vacation in the months of April and May: we are obliged to attend workshops and trainings—never mind that some of these are just for show, forcing us to listen to the same speakers on the same topics that they are not expert of—then to report to school to assist in the enrolment, etc. Because of cost-cutting measures, the quality of our seminars suffers. Worse, sometimes, we have to shoulder the expenses for the seminars.

We can't even indulge in life's simple luxuries simply because we don't have the means. I can't even sustain my love for reading anymore because it means sacrificing some basic family needs.

Regarding our uniform, we have to pay P500 per set for the cloth alone, which is already a lot of money for us. We could save a few pesos if we'd buy the cloth elsewhere. But no, there has to be a "contracted" uniform supplier.

It is high time for lawmakers, who claim that education in this country is their priority, to sincerely attend to the teachers' plight, by deed not by words. There could never be quality education if we teachers remain neglected.

Even the GSIS contributions—our personal and employer's—are not regularly remitted to the GSIS.

It seems our government doesn't really care for us. Is it because not one among the children of our top public officials and lawmakers are in public schools?

**—BELEN D. ASUELO,**
**Teacher 1, Don A. Roces Sr. Science**
**Technology High School,**
**Roces Avenue, Quezon City**

## Is Comelec's Brawner a Filipino citizen?

THIS IS IN REFERENCE TO THE MAY 7 editorial titled "Battered, Brawnered."

Using Brawner's convoluted logic, I am tempted to ask: Is he a Filipino? I seem to recall that one of his ancestors was not a natural-born Filipino.

And if Brawner is not a Filipino, then what right does he have to be a Comelec commissioner. And if he has none, what right does he have to issue a ruling declaring Naga City Mayor Jesse Robredo a foreigner?

**—RAMON LUKBAN,**
**mon_lukban@yahoo.com**

LETTERS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

## Can Comelec reverse an act of Congress?

WE REFERRED JUSTICE ISAGANI Cruz's column, titled "Sections 66 and 67 of the Omnibus Election Code" (INQUIRER, 4/14/07), particularly the portion that dealt with the effect of the filing of the certificate of candidacy for elective positions, to the local office of the Commission on Elections here. We wanted to know Comelec's opinion because the provisions may apply to some local officials here in Bislig City.

In response, the local Comelec office gave us a copy of its Resolution 7767, promulgated on Nov. 30, 2006 and titled "Rules and Regulations Implementing RA No. 9006, otherwise known as the 'Fair Election Act' in relation to the May 14, 2007 Synchronized National and Local Elections."

Sec. 38 of the resolution reads as follows: "Effect of Filing of Certification of Candidacy by Elective Officials.—Any elective official, whether national or local, who has filed a certificate of candidacy for the same or other office shall not be considered resigned from his office."

The resolution, in effect, reverses Sec. 67 of BP 881.

It appears that Justice Cruz is unaware of this resolution because he failed to mention it in his column.

Can a rule, such as that contained in a Comelec resolution, supersede or negate a law passed by Congress (when generally, the purpose of the former is to be an enabling law to implement the latter)? May we seek the comments of Justice Cruz on this?

**—BONIFACIO A. OLVIDA,**
**Bislig City, Surigao del Sur**

## NPC had right to sell Manansala mural

WE WRITE CONCERNING NEAL H. Cruz's May 4 column, "The case of the missing Manansala."

Contrary to what he wrote, the election for the National Press Club (NPC) officers was held in May 2006—not last February—in accordance with NPC's constitution and by-laws. The results of the first election held on May 5, 2006 were nullified because it violated a TRO issued by a Manila trial court. Subsequently, another election under the court's supervision was held on June 18, 2006. The candidates of the Press Freedom Party won in that election.

The Reform Party tried—but failed—to secure another TRO from the Court of Appeals where it questioned the lower court's decision. Cruz should know that a lower court's ruling, unless and until reversed by the appellate court, remains valid, legal and enforceable.

The column unfairly and maliciously insinuated that the disposition of the Manansala mural by the present NPC leadership was unlawful and done surreptitiously. It is not our fault that Cruz was unable to attend the general assembly held October 2006 (notices were sent out for the holding of the general assembly, which was held strictly in accordance with the NPC by-laws), or that previous administrations failed to muster a quorum during their watch.

Cruz alleged that the mural belongs to the GSIS, not to NPC. We have in our possession documents to prove that the land, the building and all improvements therein, including the mural, belong to NPC, not the GSIS.

During the wake of columnist Larry Sipin in July last year, we ask Cruz what to do with the Manansala mural, considering it was fast deteriorating.

After being told that the NPC was financially strapped to spend for its restoration, Cruz told us to proceed with the sale on condition that we exercise utmost transparency and prudence in handling the proceeds. That conversation happened in the presence of Sen. Jinggoy Estrada and several fellow journalists.

The decision to sell the mural was guided only by an intent to preserve it for posterity—not just for NPC's sake but for the country.

The P10 million proceeds from the sale remain intact and are deposited with PNB. Cruz and all other members of NPC are welcome to inspect NPC's financial books.

The only amounts so far appropriated from the fund are the P500,000 we paid to Meralco as partial payment for outstanding electric bills incurred by previous administrations, about P1 million for the purchase of a new elevator to be installed soon, and a little less than P1 million to cover the cost of electrical rewiring and installation of individual meters for tenants as required by Meralco. The installation of the separate meters will in the long-term save NPC millions of pesos in electric bills.

The balance of the fund will be put in a perpetual trust fund that future administrations cannot touch. Only the interest of the fund will be used for benefits and financial assistance to members.

**—ROY MABASA,**
**president,**
**National Press Club**

*IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph*

*Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.*

On May 14, 2007, the Filipino voters will once more choose 12 candidates for Senator.

We have chosen a group of 12 candidates, based on five criteria:

- Pursuit of Democracy, Stability and Development
- Proven adherence to the rule of law
- Independence of thought and initiative in action
- Exemplary performance in public office
- Balancing the wisdom of the mature and the idealism of the young

Based on these five criteria, we endorse the following candidates for Senator, in alphabetical order:

**Angara** Edgardo
**Arroyo** Joker
**Defensor** Mike
**Escudero** Francis
**Legarda** Loren
**Montano** Cesar
**Pangilinan** Francis
**Pichay** Prospero
**Recto** Ralph
**Sotto** Tito
**Villar** Manuel
**Zubiri** Miguel

**Victorino Balais**
National President
PHILIPPINE TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS' ORGANIZATION (PTGWO)

**Atty. Allan Montaño**
National President
FEDERATION OF FREE WORKERS (FFW)

**Temistocles Dejon Jr.**
National President
ALL WORKERS ALLIANCE OF TRADE UNIONS (AWATU)

**Jose Umali Jr.**
National President
NATIONAL UNION BANK EMPLOYEES (NUBE)

**Reginald Ricohermoso**
National Vice President
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TRADE UNIONS (NATU)

**Angelito Calderon**
National President
ALLIANCE OF FILIPINO WORKERS (AFW)

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# 'All politics is local,' especially in vote-rich Mindanao

From page A1

local, midterm elections ... It is still the machinery (that will prevail)," he said.

TU strategists claim the command votes in Mindanao—a region of 12 million voters where the ominous ghost of "Hello Garci" still lingers—would be enough to propel at least half of TU candidates to the Senate.

Consider these numbers:

Fifty-three administration candidates for municipal mayors are running unopposed, and the largest concentration is found in Maguindanao, with 21 supposedly sure winners, according to a list prepared by the Lakas ruling coalition.

In other areas, virtually unopposed are 24 city mayors and 237 municipal mayors, their opponents running either as independents or under local—and sometimes unknown—parties, according to the Lakas count.

TEAM Unity holds its "Miting de Avance" in Davao City on Tuesday. Some of TU's Senate bets are Tito Sotto (2nd from left), Mike Defensor (4th from left) and Ralph Recto (3rd from right) join reelectionist Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte (4th from right).

BING GONZALES/INQUIRER MINDANAO

### 12-0 is mere rhetoric

The 237 municipal mayors include five in the Cordillera Region, 23 (Region 1), eight (Region 2), three (Region 3), 11 (Region 4), three (Region 5), 28 (Region 6), 14 (Region 7), 28 (Region 8), 24 (Region 9), 35 (Region 10), four (Region 11), 15 (Region 12), 24 (Muslim Mindanao Region) and 12 (Caraga).

In the congressional races, 196 of 212 districts boast of strong administration contenders, including 95 Lakas congressmen, Lakas executive director Ray Roquero said.

The list also shows that GO has fielded candidates in only about 20 percent of 1,502 mayoral races.

With no opposition opponents to speak of in 80 percent of the mayoral contests, administration candidates are left to slug it out among themselves, Lakas strategists say.

### Angara's claim

"12-0 is rhetoric but that rhetoric is close to reality here in Mindanao than in any other parts of the country," reelectionist Sen. Edgardo Angara said during the last TU caravan in Mindanao.

"After we circumnavigated the whole of Mindanao, my fearless forecast is it's going to be 9-2-1 in favor of TU," Angara said, referring to Loren Legarda and Manny Villar of GO and independent Gregorio Honasan as the trio that could break into the winning circle.

Angara is basing his claim on GO's inability to carry on a full-scale campaign due to financial constraints.

Reporters who have covered TU candidates since early on in the campaign have noted a big increase in attendance at their rallies. In some areas, they are practically mobbed, with actor Cesar Montano standing out as the darling of the provincial folk.

Military and police checkpoints ensure there are no untoward incidents, even in the darkest alleys.

### Voter discontent

Barely noticed in the noise of the campaign is the real story—massive voter discontent as a result of extreme poverty—an issue that fires the opposition campaign.

Surveys show discontent with the scandal-ridden Arroyo administration could benefit some GO candidates.

TU candidate Rep. Prospero Pichay, of Surigao del Sur, said while opposition candidates were popular, their problem was how to translate this into votes.

Pichay cited the case of late actor Fernando Poe Jr. who was extremely popular but lacked the political machinery in his 2004 election fight with Ms Arroyo.

### Only 1 gov under GO

Lakas strategists also claim administration dominance in the gubernatorial races, saying only Iloilo Gov. Neil Tupas is officially running under GO.

"They are are all proadministration candidates—Lakas-Kampi-NPC. Whoever wins will still support the administration," said Roquero.

Two erstwhile opposition allies—South Cotabato Gov. Daisy Fuentes and Ilocos Norte gubernatorial candidate Michael Keon—have also "committed to support" TU candidates, said Roquero.

He said Malacañang was targeting a "minimum of 8" winners in the senatorial fights.

### Anti-GMA votes

Opposition senatorial candidate Alan Peter Cayetano blamed the failure of GO to organize a nationwide machinery on the lack of resources.

"Usually in midterm elections, even those with an opposition heart and mind take cover with the administration because of survival, and the resources, finances and machinery the government has," Cayetano told the INQUIRER.

He cited two other reasons: The opposition doesn't have a standard-bearer in midterm polls and, in a multiparty system, it's hard for parties to agree on a common candidate for a single post.

"If you have many candidates, the administration gains," he said. But he remained confident the electorate would ultimately support GO.

"The people will support those who fought her (Ms Arroyo's) policies. There's massive support. You can only cheat so much."

### Power of the mayors

Roquero said the support of mayoral aspirants was "very crucial," stressing that the authorization to field poll watchers was usually delegated to local candidates.

"From the national level, in Lakas, we delegate [the task] to provincial or district candidates, then the governor or congressman delegates this to the city or municipal mayors ... They know the people down below," Roquero said.

"The opposition has no watchers because they have no local candidates," he said. "Who will watch their votes?"

### Power of sample ballots

Roquero said sample ballots were also a powerful weapon and doubted that GO candidates could match TU in that area.

"With the lengthy list of local and national candidates, not to mention party-list groups, sample ballots play a crucial role," he said. "This is one case where the barangays decide national elections."

Cayetano was unimpressed.

"No. 1, it has been proven time and time again that the people follow their local leaders only until the local level, but they vote for who they want in the national (contests)," Cayetano said.

### Church, media crucial

"Second, since we don't have a strong party system, even TU mayoral candidates will support GO senatorial bets because of long political and personal ties."

Also, in areas where the media are active and where there's a free flow of information, "voters are much more independent of any influence," Cayetano said.

"Fourth, you're assuming that the only influence is the local government units, but the Church has influence, nongovernment organizations and business have influences that negate (whoever) the local government units may carry," said Cayetano.

The lawmaker downplayed the "hype" about the administration machinery.

### No need to cheat

He said that in the 1998 presidential election, there were 25 to 40 districts where Lakas congressmen supporting administration standard-bearer Jose de Venecia ran unopposed.

"Still, Erap (Joseph Estrada) won in most, if not all, of those districts. The same thing occurred in 2004. There were many districts with no opposition candidates, still FPJ (Fernando Poe Jr.) beat GMA, except that GMA had Garci," Cayetano said, referring to former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano and to allegations that Garcillano rigged votes to ensure Ms Arroyo's victory.

Cayetano added: "All this talk about machinery vote is insulting to the Filipino voters because it's made to appear that they cannot decide for themselves who's the better choice to lead the country."

Asked about possible cheating, Roquero said: "No need. The elections will just reaffirm our dominance as a political party."

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# Comelec asked to disqualify ...

From page A1

nat), Bantay or the True Marcos Loyalist Association of the Philippines Inc.

Kalahi Sectoral Party, Kasangga sa Kaunlaran Inc., Youth League for Peace Advancement (Lypad), Agbiang Timpuyong Ilocano Inc., Aging Pilipino Organization Inc. (Aging Pinoy), Biyaheng Pinoy, and United Movement Against Drugs (Uni-MAD).

With five days before Election Day, Akbayan Rep. Etta Rosales said she hoped the Comelec "would compensate for the delay that it caused by withholding the names of party-list nominees and act on the complaint with utmost dispatch."

"They should hold special en banc sessions, if necessary, to act on the disqualification complaint before the May 14 elections," Rosales told reporters.

### Recycled

Akbayan said some of the member organizations of Sigaw ng Bayan, a government-supported group that advocates Charter change through people's initiative, were "recycled" party-list groups.

Rosales urged the Comelec to revisit the accreditation of groups whose participation in the party-list race "threatens the integrity and the spirit of a democratic and progressive innovation in our political system."

In the petition, Akbayan said Sigaw ng Bayan members like APOI, Aksa, Babae Ka, Kasangga, and Kalahi should be considered adjuncts of, or entities funded or assisted by the government.

### Already disqualified

Akbayan also wants groups that have already been disqualified stricken out of the race.

These include Bantay, or the True Marcos Loyalist, which had already been disqualified in the Supreme Court's landmark 2001 ruling, Bagong Bayani OFW v. Comelec.

Akbayan also said that Bantay should be disqualified because it was a front organization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Also accused as a recycled party-list was Raul Lambino's Banat, which was already disqualified to run in this year's polls but, Rosales said, was "surprisingly allowed" to apply for accreditation again.

"Banat lost in two previous party-list elections and did not participate in the 2001 polls. For all intents and purposes, under the party-list law, it should have been considered a dead organization," Rosales said.

Lypad failed to submit its list of nominees to the poll body and should therefore be blocked from participating in the party-list elections. Akbayan claimed Lypad's officers also work for Malacañang's Office of External Affairs (OEA).

As for the other groups, Akbayan said allegations on their nature and links with the government were "serious enough" to warrant further inquiry by the Comelec.

Akbayan urged the poll body to exercise its constitutional powers on its own to revisit the accreditation of Agbiag, Aging Pinoy, Biyaheng Pinoy, and Uni-MAD.

### Ties to Palace

Aging Pinoy is one of the party-list groups linked to an alleged OEA scheme to sell party-list seats.

Uni-MAD is said to be a "rehash" of the Mamamayan Laban sa Droga, a party-list group that was disqualified by the Supreme Court in 2001, according to Akbayan.

Agbiag's nominees include Malacañang's OEA Assistant Secretary Marcelo Fariñas, while Biyaheng Pinoy is the party-list group of Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr.'s brother Arsenio Abalos.

"The close, if not incestuous ties of these groups with high-ranking government officials and the alleged administration plan to back party-list groups demand further inquiry from this honorable commission," Rosales said.

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## Correction

IN THE MAY 8 ISSUE, an article on Page A16—"'Little charmer' campaigns hard"—misstated that Manuel L. Quezon was the first President of the Philippine republic. Emilio Aguinaldo was the first President of the Philippine republic. Quezon was the first President of the Philippine Commonwealth.

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## THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, May 10, 2007
5th Week of Easter
Bl. Damian Joseph de Veuster of Moloka'I

**1st Reading:** Acts 15:7-21
**Gospel:** John 15:9-11

Jesus said to his disciples, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; remain in my love. You will remain in my love if you keep my commandments, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

"I have told you all this, that my own joy may be in you and your joy may be complete."

**Commentary**

*Peter speaks first in favor of not imposing old laws on the new believers because the Spirit of God came to them without their experiencing the old law. We are saved by the favor of God, not the law. Then Paul and Barnabas recount all that has happened as they preached on mission. And James quotes the scriptures of old to speak about what God has done in Jesus and is doing now. He says that they are not to hinder what God is doing by demanding circumcision but should only require those things that will not cause scandal: abstain from anything connected to idols, illicit sexual unions, and eating the meat of strangled animals and blood (what would be the equivalent of these issues today?) What are our idols—of war, commerce, selfishness, avarice, domination? The last issue is one of hygiene at the time. What would the Spirit say now?*

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# Ex-priest defends Miriam's son

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

A CONVENOR OF THE Alliance of Rural Concerns yesterday defended the party-list group's nomination of a son of administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago to the House of Representatives.

Ed de la Torre of the ARC also denied that his party-list group was a Malacañang front.

"The ARC is an alliance of many segments of society whose main advocacy is the concerns of the rural communities," said De la Torre, a former Roman Catholic priest.

The ARC includes sectors which are for or against the administration. "So it is erroneous to say that the ARC is a front of Malacañang," De la Torre said.

De la Torre said the ARC chose Narciso Santiago III, the 36-year-old son of Senator Santiago and Narciso Santiago Jr., a presidential adviser on revenue enhancement, because of his experience in promoting the development of rural areas.

"He has been in charge of the projects on rural matters in the office of Sen. Miriam Santiago. He is an advocate of the plight of our people in the rural areas. So, the ARC has chosen him to be one of its nominees," De la Torre said.

"The essence of democracy is the right of the people to choose their representatives and leaders," De la Torre added.

The young Santiago is the first nominee of the ARC. He would sit in the House of Representatives if the group garnered enough votes to qualify for representation.

He is one of the relatives of Malacañang officials and allies of the administration named as nominees of "marginalized" sectors.

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Philippine Fisheries Code (RA8550)
Film Development Council of the Philippines Law (RA9167)
Optical Media Law (RA9239)
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# Congressman sued for mayor's murder

By Joey A. Gabieta
*Inquirer Visayas*

TACLOBAN CITY—THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF Investigation (NBI) in Eastern Visayas filed on Monday a murder charge against a Samar congressman and six others for the killing of a town mayor.

The complaint, filed by NBI regional director Antonio Pagatpat, named Samar 2nd district Rep. Catalino Figueroa, Daram Vice Mayor Bartolome Figueroa, Edgar Figueroa and four unidentified men as among those involved in the assassination of Mayor Benito Astorga of Daram, Samar.

Figueroa is a close ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo and is seeking a second term.

Astorga had served his town for nine years with his wife, Lucia, running in 1998 to break the three-term limit. He was supposed to run for another term in next week's elections.

A lone assassin, later identified to be Arthur Ponay, shot Astorga last Jan. 25 in Barangay Birawan at a village fiesta.

Ponay, said to be a grandson of Figueroa, was arrested by NBI operatives on Feb. 20 in front of a bakery in Catbalogan, Samar.

He is detained at the regional office of the NBI and was earlier charged with murder at the Samar provincial prosecutor's office hours after he was arrested.

Reached for his comment, Representative Figueroa dismissed the charge filed against him and his co-accused.

"That is political harassment. I did not come from a family of murderers. My conscience is clear and I did not kill him or anyone," he said in a mobile phone interview.

He, however, said he would face the murder case. "But right now, I cannot give my total focus on that made-up complaint against me as I am still busy with my campaigning," Figueroa added.

The NBI said Figueroa met with his co-accused at the house of his grandson, Vice Mayor Bartolome Figueroa, in Bacagay, also in Daram, in the first week of November 2006.

It was at that meeting that the plot to kill Astorga was planned, the NBI said.

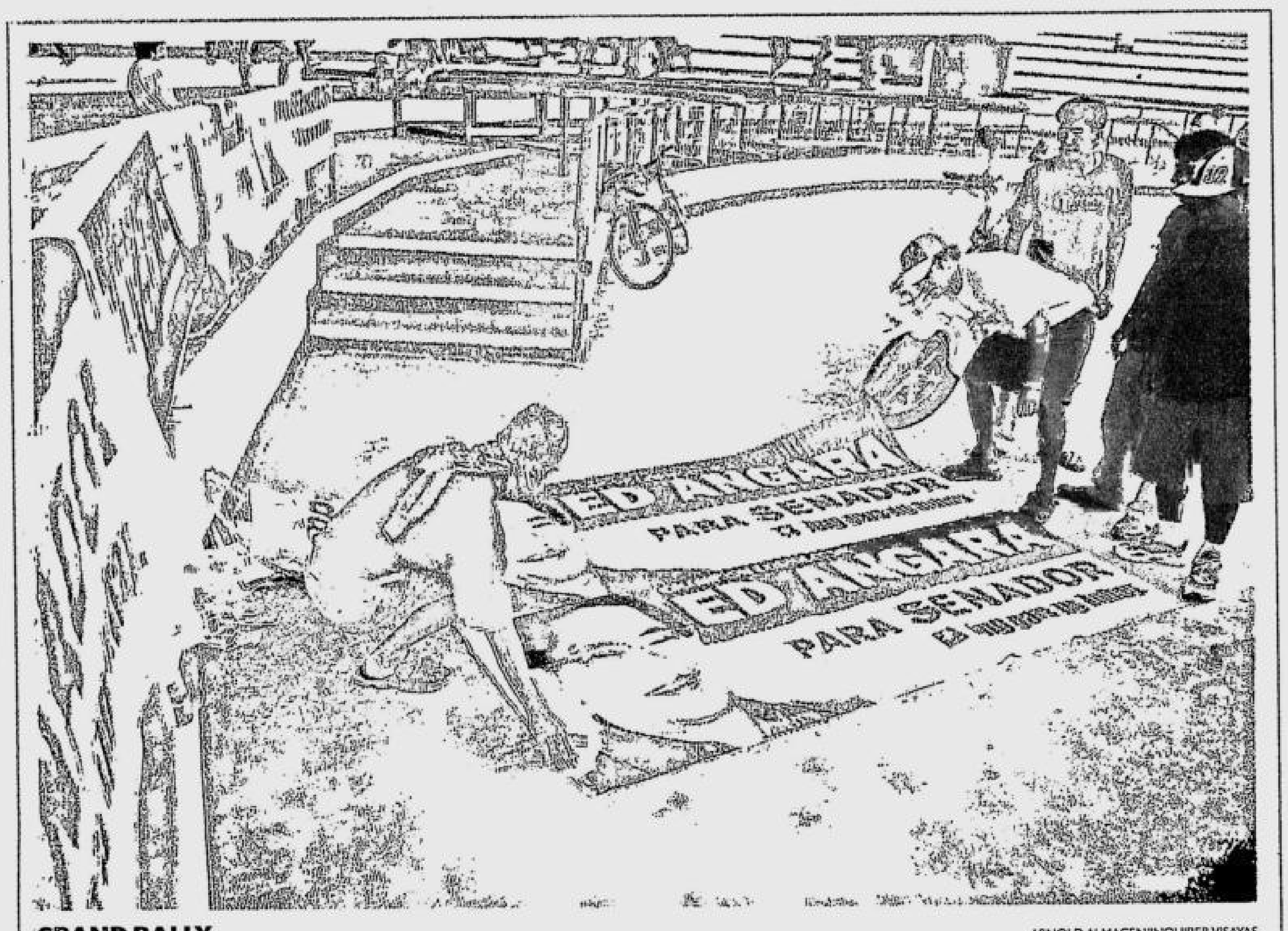
The congressman offered P1 million as a bounty for Astorga, said investigators.

Astorga was killed on Jan. 25, barely two months after the meeting in the vice mayor's house.

"What makes this more appalling was that he is a congressman...," said Pagatpat.

Figueroa is one of the congressmen who voted to kill the impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo over charges she cheated in the 2004 elections.

> 'What makes this more appalling was that he is a congressman'



**GRAND RALLY** ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS
**Posters of candidates are being prepared for a big rally of candidates for the Senate at the Freedom Grandstand in Iloilo City.**

# Perjury rap puts Pampanga gov's bid in peril

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—PAMPANGA Vice Gov. Joseller Guiao on Wednesday filed a disqualification case against reelectionist Gov. Mark Lapid for perjury, or for "falsely stating" his civil status as single when he was actually married to and has a daughter by a Korean woman.

Guiao, the running mate of gubernatorial candidate Lilia Pineda, filed the case before the Commission on Elections provincial office here.

Lapid's chief campaigner, Fidel Arcenas, said the governor will not issue any statement until he has officially received a copy of the complaint.

Arcenas said Lapid was devoting the entire Wednesday to rest for his scheduled "victory motorcade" on Thursday.

"Having entered his civil status [in his certificate of candidacy] constitutes a violation of the Omnibus Election Code because his statements there were supposed to be truthful," Guiao told the Inquirer.

Perjury, he said, was punishable with disqualification.

Temie Lambino, Comelec provincial supervisor, said Guiao's lawyers filed the case.

Guiao said the case built up on the exclusive story aired by GMA 7's 24 Oras on Tuesday night. Reported by Kara David, the story presented documents that Lapid, 28, was married to a certain Yuri Park. It showed photographs of the woman, the daughter and Lapid's mother, Marissa.

It also aired the statements of the woman who claimed that Lapid asked her to keep the marriage a secret because of his political career.

"Upon verification, we found documents supporting the claim of the woman, that they were indeed married in Las Vegas and that the Clark county in Nevada issued them a certified abstract of marriage," Guiao said.

The couple was supposedly married on March 31, 2005. Their daughter, who took Lapid's surname, was born on Sept. 22, 2005. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

# Party-list groups deny backing GMA candidate

LEGAZPI CITY—THREE PARTY-list groups, who are front runners in the May 14 elections, denied giving support to former Rep. Joey Salceda in his bid for the gubernatorial post of Albay.

The three groups—Bayan Muna, Anakpawis and Gabriela—came under fire from various sectors after it was noted that their campaign vehicles bore streamers of Salceda during a caravan.

Observers in Albay were alarmed by a possible connection between the support of these left-leaning party-list groups with published reports of an alleged P40-million pay-off to the NPAs by a gubernatorial candidate allied with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

These party-list groups were accused by the military of being fronts of the NPA, a charge which they repeatedly denied.

Brig. Gen. Arsenio Arugay, commanding general of the Army's 9th Infantry Division, earlier said that candidates openly supporting these party-list groups were considered to have paid permit-to-campaign fees to the NPA.

Cathy Ascutia, provincial chair of Gabriela, told the Inquirer that they did not commit support for Salceda and were not endorsing his candidacy.

Ascutia explained it was Salceda who sent the vehicles to their group, which they used, but this did not mean they were beholdened to him. *Bobby Q. Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

# Dismissed DPWH exec is GMA bet in Bulacan

**PLEYTO**

A DISMISSED OFFICIAL OF THE Department of Public Works and Highways facing several graft cases is setting his sights on a congressional seat in Bulacan under the administration party Kampi.

Former Public Works Undersecretary Salvador Pleyto, who was dismissed last year for falsifying his Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN), is challenging the reelection bid of Bulacan Rep. Reylina Nicolas of the fourth district.

Pleyto's son, Russel, is running for reelection as vice mayor of Sta. Maria. Another son, Salvador Juan Jr., is running for councilor of Quezon City.

Pleyto's dismissal from the DPWH stemmed from his failure to disclose the business interests of his wife for 10 years.

He was assigned to the DPWH's Southern Tagalog and Cordillera offices. It was in the Cordillera where he became the DPWH's regional director.

Pleyto, during his stint as undersecretary when Florante Soriquez was DPWH secretary, was questioned for unexplained wealth.

Pleyto is scheduled to face the Sandiganbayan on May 29 for his preliminary hearing and on June 1 for his pre-trial for the graft complaints.

Last year, Presidential Anti-Graft Commission Chair Constancia de Guzman recommended Pleyto's dismissal.

Court records showed that Pleyto violated Section 8 of Republic Act No. 6713 (Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees).

Pleyto, according to the documents, stated in his SALN from 1992 to 2000 that his wife, Miguela, was a businesswoman. To the question of whether he, his wife or their children had other financial or business interests, Pleyto had declared "none," according to De Guzman.

From 2000 to 2002, Pleyto did not answer the particular question in his SALN. It was in 2003 and in 2004 that he started to answer the question again.

De Guzman, in a statement, said Pleyto's case was brought to the PAGC's attention in December 2002 by "concerned employees of the DPWH." *Inquirer Central Luzon*

## ROUNDUP

### PMA cadet dies of pneumonia

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—A freshman cadet of the Philippine Military Academy died of severe pneumonia on Tuesday at the AFP Medical Center in Quezon City, academy officials said. John Limuel Burcer, 17, of Quezon City, was transferred from the PMA Station Hospital to the AFP Medical Center on Tuesday morning but doctors there failed to save him, according to Capt. Dennis Solomon, PMA public information officer. Solomon said Burcer had been confined at the PMA hospital since April 27 and briefly treated at the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center on May 1 because he had breathing problems.

*Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

### Disqualification hearings end

KIDAPAWAN CITY—The provincial office of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) in North Cotabato has terminated its hearings on the disqualification case filed against a gubernatorial candidate. Yogie Martirizar, North Cotabato election supervisor, said the last hearing on the case filed against Kampi gubernatorial candidate Rogelio Taliño was held on Monday. Taliño is accused of massive "vote-buying" by his rival, Lakas-CMD candidate Jesus Sacdalan, and running mate Emmanuel Piñol. Sacdalan sought the governorship after serving three terms as vice governor for Governor Piñol, who is now running in the vice gubernatorial race. Sacdalan and Piñol said Taliño distributed P5,000 each to several village leaders in M'lang town in a bid to convince them to support his candidacy.

*Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*

### Solon accused of beating

DIGOS CITY—Davao del Sur Rep. Douglas Cagas and his military and police escorts were accused of beating up three village watchmen in Padada town on Friday evening. Padada Mayor Antonio Razonable yesterday said Cagas had obviously bent his ire on the watchmen, who were identified with Upper Malinao village chair John Caduyas. Caduyas was a former Cagas supporter, who now campaigns for Rep. Claude Bautista. Bautista faces Cagas in the gubernatorial race. "This is purely political harassment," Razonable said. He said he was helping the watchmen file charges against Cagas. The Inquirer tried but failed to reach Cagas.

*Eldie Aguirre, Inquirer Mindanao*

### Huey to fly again

CEBU CITY—The Philippine Air Force has lifted on Monday its earlier order to ground at least Huey helicopters after one of its kind crashed in Lapu-Lapu City on April 28 killing two crewmen and seven civilians. Maj. Gen. Pedro Ike Inserto, commanding general of the Tactical Operations Command, said the Air Force lifted the grounding order after its inspection team found that a Huey helicopter with tail number 6225 had no engine problem when it crashed.

*Jolene Bulambot, Inquirer Visayas*

### Yaranon to Binay: I'm victim, too

BAGUIO CITY—Suspended Mayor Braulio Yaranon on Tuesday consoled Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, who, he said, had become the newest "martyr" created by Malacañang. The 80-year-old Yaranon was one of the first mayors to be suspended by the Department of the Interior and Local Government in 2006, a move that critics now believed to be a political maneuver designed to benefit administration candidates in the May 14 elections. Yaranon, a retired regional trial court judge in La Union, was penalized for issuing two administrative orders that discouraged motorists from paying parking fees to a pay parking firm that a previous mayor had contracted. "I was also a victim of Malacañang," Yaranon said.

*Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

### Party-list declares caravan success

A PARTY-LIST group based in Apalit, Pampanga declared a success its caravan that passed through Edsa with 5,000 vehicles. In a statement, the Bagong Alyansang Tagapagtaguyod ng Adhikaing Sambayanan (Batas) party-list group said in a statement that the caravan was a display of discipline among the group's ranks. The group's nominees are champion bowler Bong Coo, lawyer Mel Mauricio and broadcasters Daniel Razon and Jay Sonza. Razon, in a speech at Quirino Grandstand in Luneta where the caravan ended, said the group would render better public service if it wins seats in the House of Representatives.

### Palparan wants Satur seatmate

SAN MIGUEL, Bulacan—Retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, the scourge of political activists and leftists, said he wants to sit near Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo should their party-list groups win seats in Congress. But here's the catch: Palparan said he would only do so should boxing champion Manny Pacquiao sit between them as a "referee."

*Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon*

**HEALTH SERVICE** CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
**National Housing Authority general manager Federico Laxa checks on residents of Southville 2 in Trece Martires, Cavite during a medical mission organized by the Kabayan Foundation.**

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INQUIRER *Southern Luzon*

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# A tale of two mothers

**By Nina Catherine Calleja**
*Trece Martirez City, Cavite*

**CHRISTMAS Day of 2003: The Manano family plays card games in the house of Isaias' grandparents. The consequence of losing the game is a baby powder mark. Third from right is Isaias. At his right is his mother.** CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

HOW COULD MOTHERS IN THIS country be at peace when the number of sons becoming victims of human rights violations is soaring?" Maria Edna Arcal asked, referring to the reported abduction last week of leftist activist Jonas Joseph Burgos.

'Think how a mother feels when she does not know where her son is, and what is happening to him'

Arcal is the mother of Axel Pinpin, one of five farmers collectively known as the "Tagaytay 5" and who is now detained in a jail at Camp Vicente Lim in Laguna.

Working in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates for almost 20 years, Arcal came back to the Philippines to visit her son, who is facing rebellion charges for supposedly plotting to overthrow the Arroyo administration together with Aristides Sarmiento, Riel Custodio, Michael Masayes and Rico Ybaez.

Their supporters claimed they were farmer organizers of the Kalipunan ng mga Magbubukid sa Kabite (Kamagsasaka-Ka), the provincial chapter of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP).

The "Tagaytay 5" said they were abducted on April 28 by armed policemen in plainclothes.

Arcal was surprised to find a similarity of Pinpin to Burgos.

Also a member of a farmer's group Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Bulacan, Burgos disappeared on April 28.

"[Pinpin] and Burgos are both 34 years old, both took an agriculture course, and are members of the same peasant organization," she said.

"*Ganito na ba talaga dito? Masama na ba talaga ang tumulong sa kapwa*? (Is it already like this here? Is it now a crime to help people?)"

### Mothers' instinct

She said she sympathized with the mothers of human rights victims. "Think how a mother feels when she does not know where her son is, and what is happening to him," she said in Filipino.

Arcal felt she was fortunate that Pinpin was surfaced by police, but the "feeling of being tortured is still there."

"The thought that my son was harassed or exploited pains me so much. I've always wanted to give him comfort," she said.

Arcal came to know about Pinpin's arrest when her daughter phoned her. She waited until midnight to watch the late night news in The Filipino Channel (TFC).

"There he was, handcuffed and clad in a prisoner's shirt, presented to the media as if he was a criminal," she said.

Every night, the picture recurs in her mind. "I can't describe the pain. I have never imagined him suffering like that," she said.

Arcal shared how Pinpin cracked jokes during family gatherings. She said her son had a "light heart" even under detention. "When I visited him, he kept on smiling, joking and laughing."

But she wanted him freed because his talents, knowledge and heart for the peasants were being wasted in detention, she said.

Her family was desperate for help in securing the release of Pinpin. "We don't know whom to talk with. The administration of [President Macapagal-Arroyo] seems deaf on this matter," she said.

### 'A day of grief'

Erlinda Manano, mother of slain activist Isaias Manano, shared Arcal's sentiments.

Isaias, secretary general of the Anakpawis party-list group in Mindoro, was shot dead on his way home on the night of April 28, 2004, the height of the group's campaign for the elections that year.

Isaias was then preparing for a convention about rice. "He was going to the communities to talk to rice farmers and visiting the offices of government officials to request for support for the activity," she recalled.

Manano remembered Isaias as a kind, responsible and thoughtful son.

"He was very open to me. He always told me his whereabouts, what he was feeling and thinking of. I knew that he meant service for everything he did for Anakpawis," she said.

She misses Isaias advance text message every Mother's Day. She said Isaias would always send her "Mama, *dakila kang ina* (Mama, you're a great mother)."

"I would never forget [Isaias]. I still feel the pain of losing a son," she said sobbing.

### Advocacy

Manano, a public school teacher, said she had lost trust in the country's judicial system.

Her suffering is somehow relieved by continuing the crusade of her son. "My advocacy now is to expose the real condition in this country where the government covers up the killings of innocent civilians," she said.

Her family has blamed government forces for the killings. No one has the capability and motive to execute that except the military or police, Manano said.

The military and police, however, denied the allegations, saying the spate of political killings was a work of the leftists.

"I want the international community to know that many sons and daughters have been killed and mothers were constantly grieving," Manano said.

The mother was one of those who testified in the recent fact-finding mission of UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Philip Alston.

Her primary goal now is to help end political killings and all kinds of harassment.

She said she was always cooperating with the mothers of victims of human rights violation.

"My fight is not just my own battle; this is a movement of the victim's families against the masterminds [of the killings and harassment]," she added.

---

# *Politicians seek Calapan musician for jingles*

**By Madonna Virola**
*Calapan City*

A MUSICIAN IN CALAPAN CITY HAS HIS hands full, producing six campaign jingles for candidates, including a congressman, mayors and provincial board members.

**ATIENZA**

"I listen to a sound before bringing it to my instruments," said Rommel Atienza, 35, who relies on "oido" to compose his melody for the jingle. It takes him half a day to complete a jingle, which usually runs for three to five minutes.

The lyrics are provided by Atienza's clients, but he edits them for the catchy rhymes.

Atienza, a computer engineer, has a recording booth with instruments for a band, such as an organ, bass guitar, lead guitar and keyboards.

Politicians used to approach another musician, Umpay Rivera, for their jingles, but Rivera has referred them to Atienza because of the latter's facilities.

People at Alinco, a store and repair shop for music facilities, said the quality of music produced by Atienza was comparable to those produced in Manila.

### Amusement

Atienza considers producing a jingle as fun and is amused to see people dance when his jingle is played around the city.

During the last local elections, he produced a jingle for former Gov. Bart Marasigan (now deceased).

Atienza has been into music since Grade 5. In high school and college, he joined the Young Christian Community's Choir at the Sto. Niño Parish, which became known in Oriental Mindoro for its singing ministry.

Atienza had been working for a computer firm in Manila since 2001 while playing in some shows and making quick visits to his family in Calapan. This time, however, he says he is back to reactivate his musical work.

Last year, he organized six high school students of the Holy Infant Academy in Calapan into a band called d2mazc (an acronym for its members). His 14-year-old son Dominic is on the keyboards.

"I admire him for his dedication to music and his students", said Shirley Saturay, owner-teacher at the Yamaha School of Music here where Atienza once taught the guitar.

Saturay did not have any second thoughts when her 14-year-old daughter Che-Che was invited by Atienza to be a guitarist-vocalist for the band.

Shortly after, Atienza put up his own music school called Rhythm and Beat, which operated for three years and also produced a guidebook for guitar playing.

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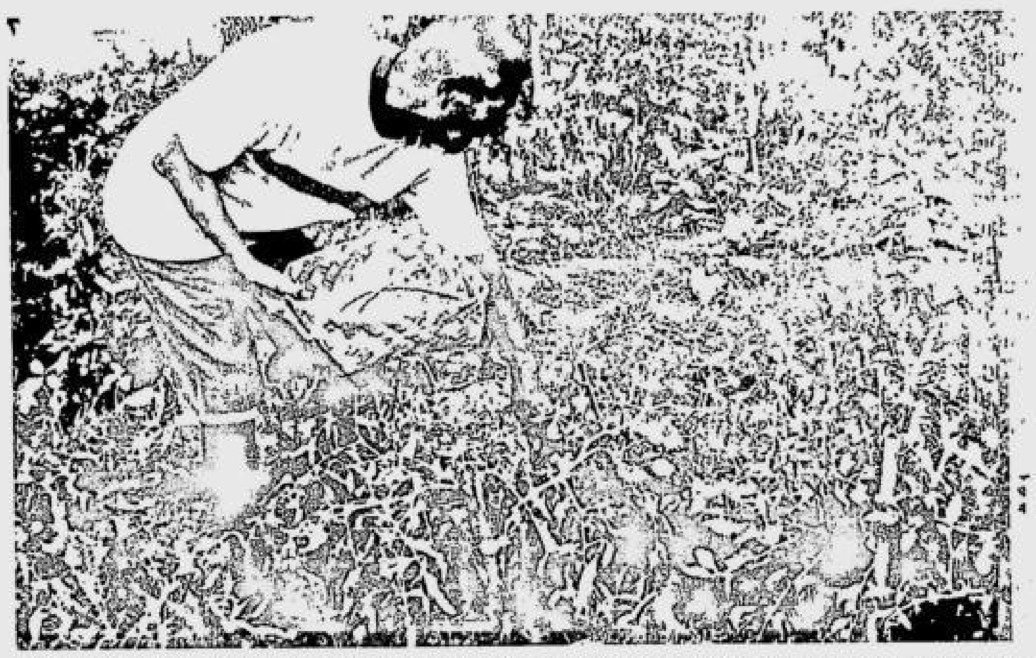
# Cavite dump now a vegetable garden

**By Niña Catherine Calleja**
*Bacoor, Cavite*

COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN Bacoor, Cavite, used to describe their dump as a "second Payatas." But who could imagine that they would be able to transform the area into a field full of vegetables?



**VEGETABLES are for free in the former dumpsite transformed into a garden.** NIÑA CATHERINE CALLEJA

Bong Garcia, assistant project officer of the Home Owners Association in Phase VI, Barangay Molino V, said that through unity and cooperation, the community was able to harvest fresh produce from the garden.

Even without support from the local government, the community started to maintain a waste management project aimed at reducing waste through recycling. It was aspiring to practice zero-waste management, Garcia said.

The project has encouraged the majority of the residents to segregate waste and convert the dump into a Material Recovery Facility (MRF), that serves as a depository and sorting area of recyclable waste materials.

The sixth phase of this MRF has a shredder machine and engine which transform biodegradable waste into organic fertilizer that goes to the garden.

Garcia said the residents participate by being responsible for their garbage and complying with Republic Act 9003 or the Philippine Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

With 222 families, the participation rate among the residents has reached 80 percent, he said.

"The project is proof that a small community is capable of addressing the concerns of waste management," he added.

### Awakening

Oscar de Jesus, 57, a resident of Phase VI for more than 23 years now, was at first hesitant about the project.

A retired customer relations manager of a Cavite firm, De Jesus said that when the Mother Earth Foundation launched a forum on waste management, almost all of the residents were suddenly awakened into realizing that one of their biggest problems was garbage.

"We could not just go on and be passive. If we won't do anything, we would suffer and so would our kids," he said.

In July 2006, Garcia proposed to the homeowners the establishment of an MRF. He recalled how difficult it was to remove all the waste from the dumpsite and convert it into a garden.

"Cleaning up the dump was the toughest part of this project but because majority of the people in the community cooperated, it became successful," he said. "We all planted the vegetables in the garden and maintained it every day."

The project started from donations from residents and when the municipal government found that the waste project was working, it gave a P300,000 grant and a garbage truck.

Able to save P10 per sack of garbage which the barangay council used to collect, the whole community is also earning P7,000 from the recyclable wastes every three months.

Garcia said the project reduced the risk of illness caused by insects.

### Apathy

De Jesus noted that the zero-waste vision of the project would be impossible to achieve if the people were not educated.

"Education about proper waste management and disposal must start within the family," he said. "Even in the family, not everyone can fully understand the importance of this project."

Garcia said he could not convince all the residents to segregate and reduce their wastes because the barangay captain did not agree with the idea.

"We are not collecting garbage, which is not segregated because we want to enforce the practice of sorting and for them to learn to do it on their own," he said. "But whenever we refuse to collect the garbage, they give it to the barangay."

Although the barangay council questioned and did not certify the project, the Department of Natural Resources gave them permission to continue.

Barangay chair Nilo Domingo admitted that the residents were not practicing segregation and reduced waste management. He pointed out, however, that the homeowners group was violating Republic Act No. 9003 because the facility was located in a residential area.

This is one of the reasons the barangay council was opposing the project, Domingo said.

"The project did not undergo legal process. How can the MRF operate without the permission of the barangay?" he said.

Domingo said the barangay council had received a complaint from a resident of Phase VI near the MRF.

But Garcia said the residents were not violating any law. "An MRF can be located even inside a residential lot. It is not a dump that really gives a disgusting odor."

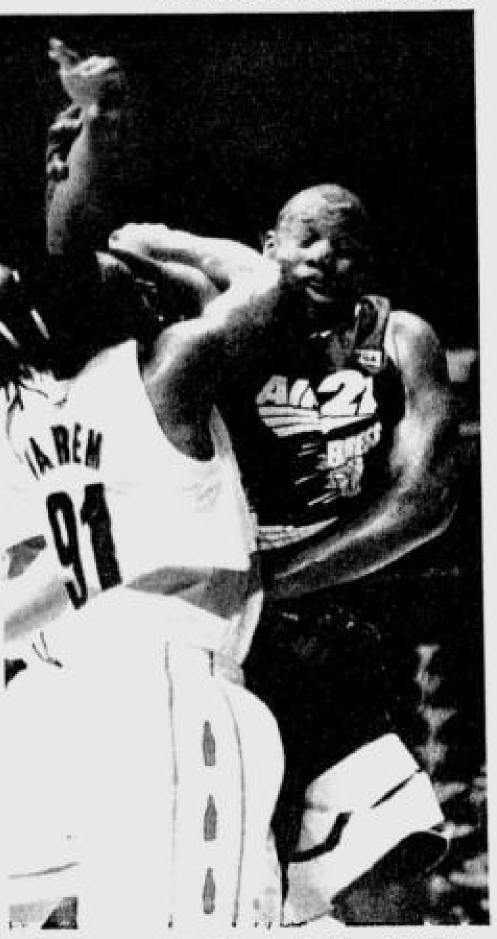
Garcia admitted that the project was "somehow costly" as the association had to employ an "Eco-boy" who would collect the households' garbage every day. The worker was given P250 per day plus meal allowance from the P40 monthly fees of the members and the money from the sold recyclable wastes.

The P40 monthly fee was increased to P60 to be able maintain the MRF, Garcia said. "But what is P20 per month compared to the P10 per sack that the barangay is collecting?"

"We want this project to be adopted by the whole barangay and then by the whole town. Afterwards, the project will just be replicated in other towns and cities," Garcia said.

## Late SPORTS

# Air21 nips Coca-Cola



COCA-COLA'S Jeff Varem (left) and Air21's Shawn Daniels mix it up in a rebound battle in last night's game. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

## Villanueva powers Bulls past Realtors

GAME TODAY (*The Arena in San Juan*)
7 p.m.—Welcoat vs Talk 'N Text

**By Musong R. Castillo**

AIR21 CLEARLY DODGED A bullet, while Red Bull recalled Enrico Villanueva from the Philippine team and won going away.

The Express and the defending champion Bulls remained tied for second place in the PBA Fiesta Cup eliminations after posting contrasting wins last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

Air21 survived a scoreless spell in the final 3:28 to churn out an 86-85 decision of Coca-Cola, while Red Bull scooted away early and fended off repeated Sta. Lucia uprisings to fashion out an easy 106-90 victory in the nightcap.

Villanueva, named last week to fill the 12th and final slot in the RP team leaving today for the Fiba-Asian Champion's Cup, showed up to lead the Bulls with 17 points after missing the team's last two outings.

Air21 and Red Bull upped their records to 9-4 behind the 10-2 Barangay Ginebra Gin Kings in the race for the top two spots that would earn automatic semifinal berths at the end of this phase.

The Express almost lost a nine-point lead in the fourth period and turned to defense to preserve the win which rookie Arwind Santos delivered as he forced a jumpoff with the driving John Arigo in the dying seconds.

Coca-Cola, which was without starting guard Alex Cabagnot because of severe stomach pains, dropped to 5-8, its chances of advancing automatically into the quarterfinals now hanging by a thread.

Sta. Lucia, on the other hand, took a fifth straight loss flush on the chin and fell a full game behind Purefoods in eighth spot with a 3-9 card.

Villanueva, despite a bad back, hit seven of his points in the breakaway second period where the Bulls turned a 23-19 edge after the first quarter into an imposing 54-31 bubble at the half.

"Our mindset coming into this game was just to get off the slump," interim Red Bull coach Gee Abanilla said, referring to the two-game slide his team just snapped. "We focused on all the things that made us successful in the first half of the tournament."

**The scores:**

**First Game**

**AIR21 86**—David 20, Daniels 13, Canaleta 13, Dimaunahan 10, Telan 9, Arboleda 9, Santos 7, Torion 3, Se 2.

**COCA-COLA 85**—Varem 24, Arigo 23, Peek 16, Tolomia 9, Yeo 4, Pacana 3, Avenido 3, Antonio 3, Calimag 0, Duremdes 0.

**Quarters:** 19-28, 48-43, 72-66, 86-85

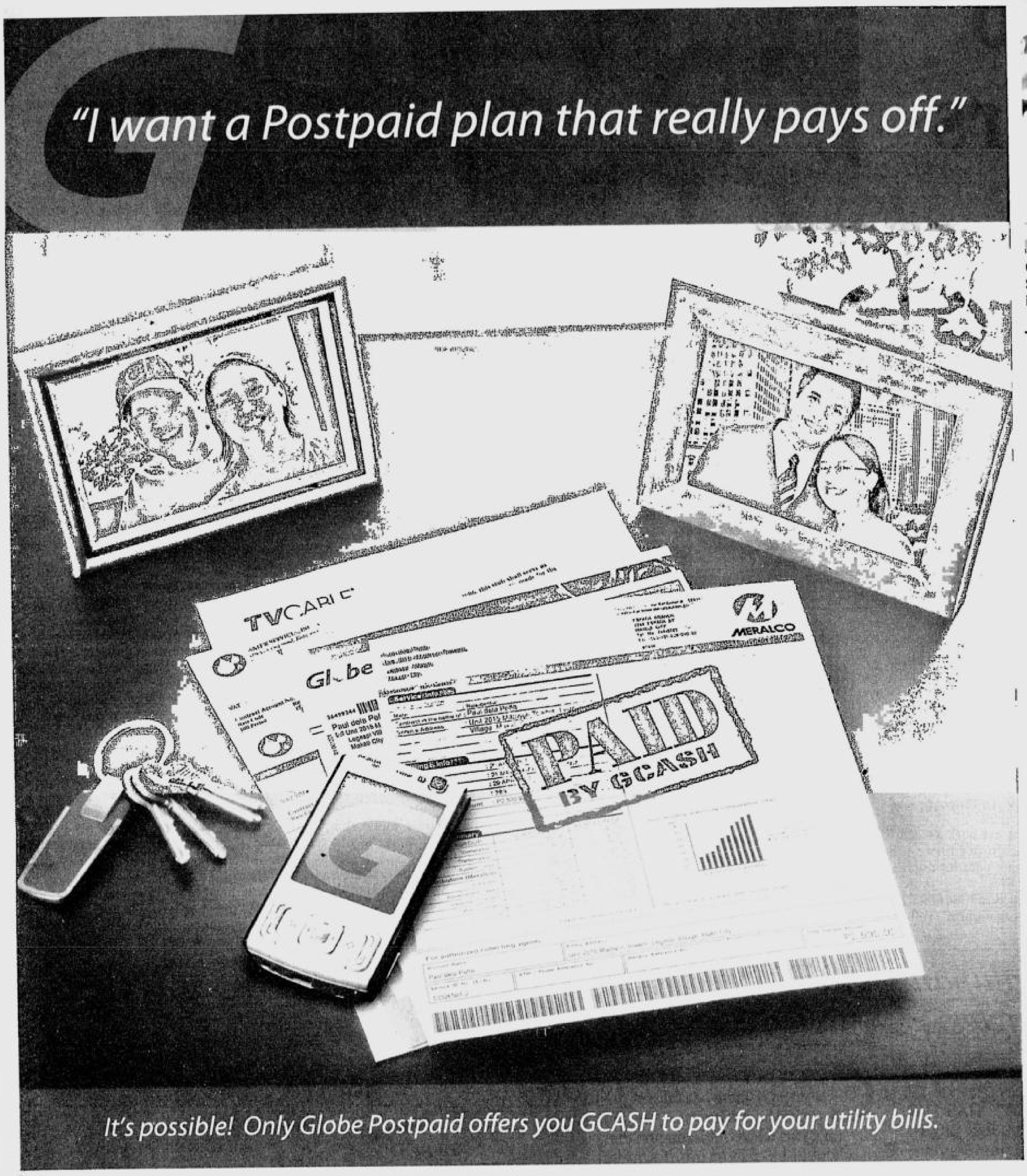
**Second Game**

**RED BULL 106**—Villanueva 17, Sharma 16, Alvarez 13, Penny 12, Baguio 12, Fonacier 9, Robinson 9, Cruz 7, Najorda 6, Hrabak 5, Ybanez 0.

**STA. LUCIA 90**—J. Williams 42, K. Williams 13, Miranda 11, Aquino 8, Isip 5, Omolon 5, Mendoza 4, Gonzales 2, Bughao 0, Ramos 0, Santos 0.

**Quarters:** 23-19, 54-31, 75-65, 106-90

More Sports stories on A23 to 26



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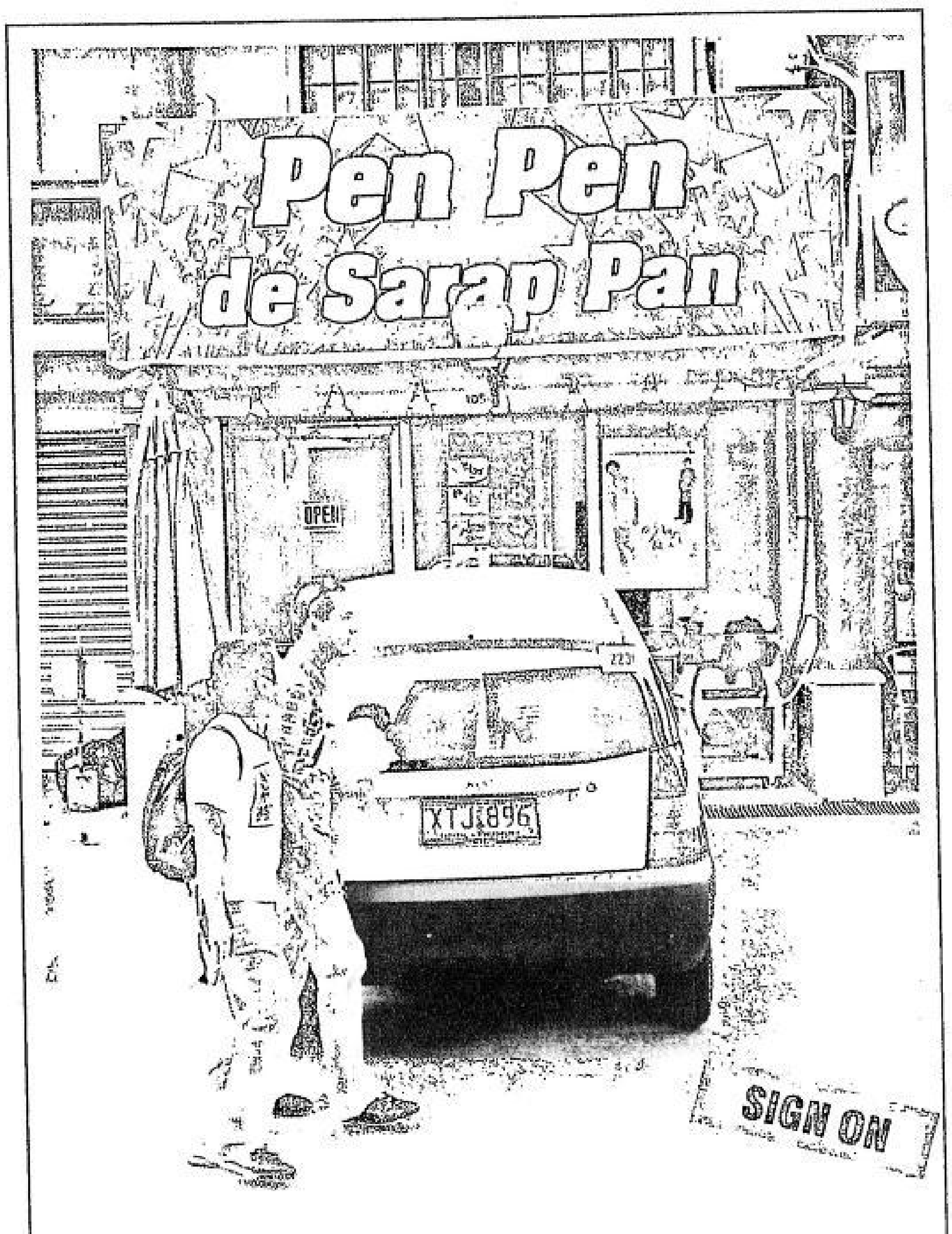


**NOT ONLY FOR CHILDREN**
Borrowing a line from a popular Filipino nursery rhyme, the owner of this restaurant at the corner of Scout Castor and Tomas Morato in Quezon City opened his establishment perhaps with not only children in mind as customers. AUGUST DE LA CRUZ

# Pasig bets exchange vote-buying charges

## 2 Roberts press for disqualification

**By Kristine L. Alave and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.**

THE PASIG CITY MAYORAL RACE has started to heat up with the two leading bets, Rep. Robert "Dodot" Jaworski and Councilor Robert "Bobby" Eusebio, trading accusations of vote-buying.

Jaworski threw the first punch after two disqualification cases against Eusebio and his party mates were filed at the Commission on Elections (Comelec) National Capital Region office on Tuesday.

One of the cases was filed by two Pasig residents who claimed they received P500 each from persons who told them to vote for Eusebio during a barangay meeting more than a week ago.

The second complaint cited television reports about another alleged case of vote-buying in a warehouse compound in another barangay.

All three petitioners asked the Comelec to disqualify Eusebio and his party mates, or to suspend their proclamation in case they win should the cases be decided after the elections.

Also named in the complaint were congressional candidate Roman Romulo, vice mayoral candidate Rosalio Martires and six candidates for councilor.

"Those are all gimmicks. They are panicking," Eusebio's father, incumbent Mayor Vicente Eusebio, said, referring to his son's opponents.

In their complaint, Venus Oraño and Maria Santos said a village leader for the Women's Alliance for Vicente Eusebio invited them to a meeting at the barangay hall in Caniogan on April 30. The women said they were given sample ballots and asked to write down their names on a sheet of paper.

They added that the organizers then called them one at a time to retrieve the sample ballots. Later on, the ballots were returned to them enclosed with P500 for each ballot.

"They told us not to forget Bobby Eusebio in the elections," the women said in their complaint.

In the second complaint, Elena Sanchez cited television reports about the alleged distribution of P500 bills to registered voters during a meeting at the Armal Compound in Barangay Maybunga.

In the reports, some residents alleged they were given sample ballots with their names, addresses and precinct numbers. They were later told to go to the compound, where they were each given P500.

"This only proves that our opponents are in total disregard of the law. This display of arrogance should be construed as a desperate attempt to keep themselves in power at all cost," Jaworski said.

The younger Eusebio, however, said that it was Jaworski who was buying votes. "Those are the accusations of a politician who is about to lose," he told reporters.

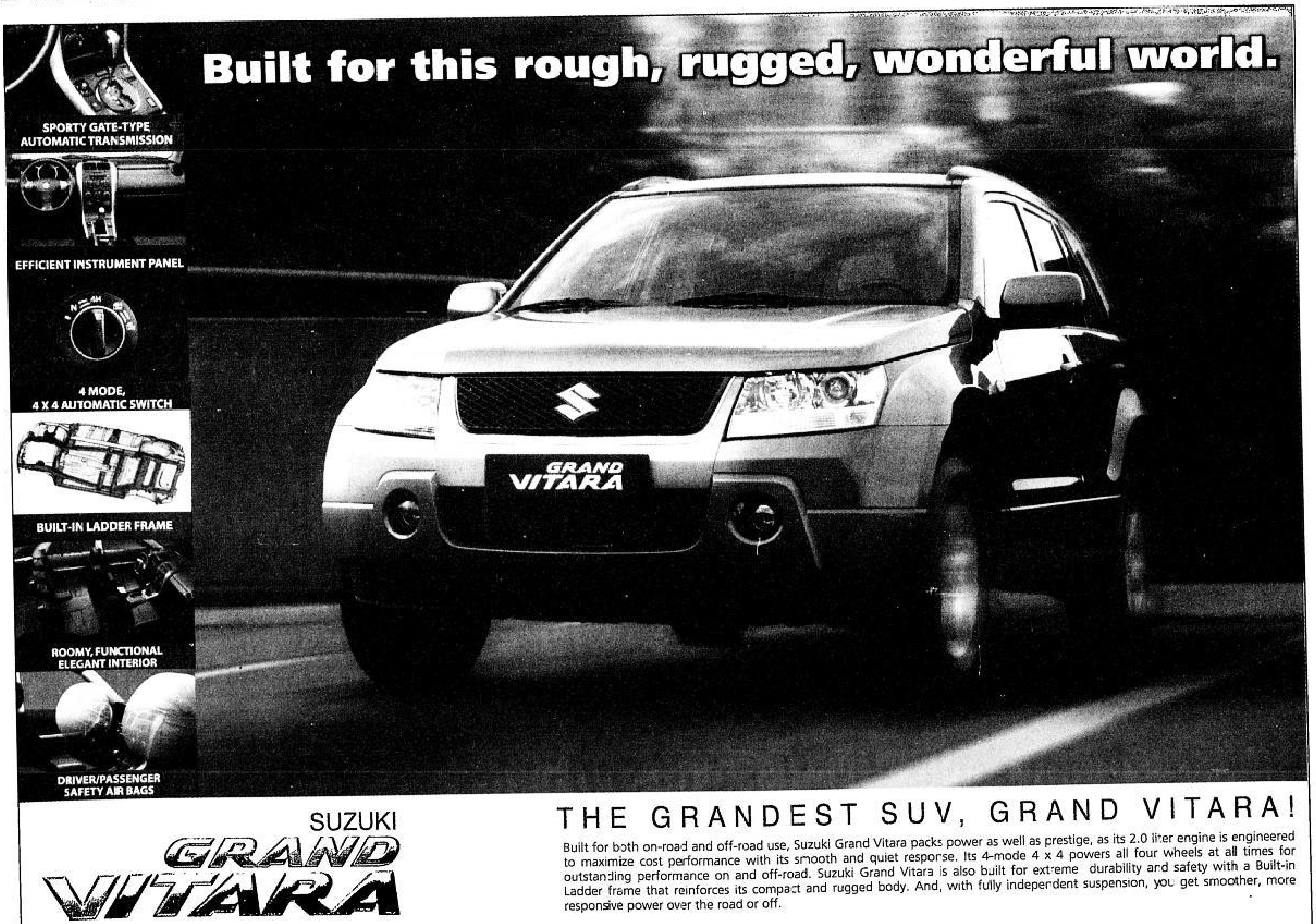
He gave out affidavits to the media signed by Myrna B. Lofamia and Rosemarie Loyola, claiming that they were coerced into testifying against Eusebio and that they saw Jaworski give money to Pasig residents. He also showed cigarette and juice packs bearing Jaworski's face, which, he said, were being distributed to residents.

Eusebio said he would ask the Comelec to disqualify Jaworski for vote-buying based on the affidavits.

The two candidates recently signed a peace covenant in front of Chief Supt. Luizo Ticman, Eastern Police District director, in which they pledged to ensure clean, honest, and peaceful elections in the city.

In a recent interview, Ticman said he was closely following developments in Pasig City, and noted that the contest was "intense."

He added that the police was coordinating with Comelec and poll watchdogs like the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting to ensure peaceful elections in the city.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# Court stops MMDA from dismantling MRT 3 ads

**By Leila B. Salaverria and DJ Yap**

THE METROPOLITAN MANILA Development Authority suffered a setback in its ongoing crackdown on illegal billboards after the Court of Appeals ruled that it can no longer dismantle advertising materials posted on the Metro Rail Transit 3.

In a ruling dated April 30, the court said that apart from the fact that MRT 3 was private property, the government had allowed its owner, the Metro Rail Transit Corp. Ltd. (MRTC) to put up ads on the railway transit system.

It added that the MMDA has neither police power nor the authority to enforce the National Building Code to warrant the removal of the billboards and streamers of Trackworks Rail Transit Advertising, Vending and Promotions Inc.

MRTC entered into an exclusive contract for advertising services with Trackworks in 1998.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando told the INQUIRER that he would appeal the appellate court ruling barring the agency from taking down advertising materials at MRT stations.

"I haven't seen a copy of that ruling. But if it's true, we will appeal that," he said in a phone interview. "These ads are illegal. They are ruining the landscape. Why are the courts allowing them to do so?" he added.

The court decision basically upheld a Pasig Regional Trial Court ruling in 2005 permanently preventing the MMDA from removing Trackworks' advertisements on the MRT 3.

Trackworks filed a case against the government agency after MMDA personnel dismantled its billboards on the railway transit system.

According to the appellate court, under the 1997 Build, Lease and Transfer agreement between MRTC and the Department of Transportation and Communications, the MRTC would own the MRT for 25 years.

It also said the BLT agreement between the DOTC and MRTC allows the latter to obtain advertising income from the transit system.

"In sum, Trackworks has a right to install signages, banners, billboards and any other commercial advertising medium on the interior and exterior structures of the MRT 3 that must be protected by a writ of preliminary injunction," the court stressed.

It added, "On the contrary ... MMDA has no power to dismantle, remove or destroy the said advertising materials of Trackworks."

The appellate court pointed out that the MMDA has no police power according to a Supreme Court ruling.

It junked MMDA's claim that when it removed Trackworks' advertisements, it was only enforcing Regulation 96-009 and Circular 88-09 prohibiting the posting of billboards, signs and other similar ads on roads, sidewalks and center islands, and banning signs that distract, blind or confuse motorists on roads, islands or sidewalks.

According to the court, MMDA regulations do not apply to Trackworks since the MRT 3 is private property.

# Taguig bar brawl victim files charges vs Borgy Manotoc

**By Julie M. Aurelio**

A MONTH AFTER HE WAS ALlegedly beaten up by commercial model Borgy Manotoc and other men outside a bar, Carlo Brown filed charges of serious physical injuries against his supposed attackers in the Taguig City Prosecutor's Office yesterday.

Apart from Manotoc, named in Brown's complaint were Embassy Bar disc jockey Ronald Passion alias "DJ Malaya" and seven other unidentified suspects whom he accused of beating him up on April 10.

Brown, 22, was accompanied by his lawyer, Herminio Banico Jr. and mother, Mara Pardo de Tavera, who also filed a perjury case against Marjorie Palabrica, one of the bar's security guards.

In a sworn statement, Palabrica earlier said she saw Brown punching a glass panel near the bar which allegedly caused the cuts on his hands.

She added that Brown lost his balance and fell through the broken glass, which, in turn, left him with nine cuts in the head.

"These were deliberate untruths that she said in her statement," Banico told the INQUIRER.

In her perjury complaint, Brown's mother said there were no wounds on her son's hands, contrary to Palabrica's claim.

"The statements of Mara and Carlo will speak for themselves," Banico added.

The complaint also contained Brown's denial that he punched the glass panel, as alleged by the security guard.

Attached to Brown's nine-page complaint was a medico-legal report from the Makati Medical Center where he was treated after the alleged mauling. The report indicated that the victim suffered abrasions, lacerations and swelling in the head and upper body.

Based on his complaint, Brown said Manotoc, whose real name is Fernando Martin Manotoc, beat him up outside the Embassy Bar at The Fort after he approached the model's girlfriend.

Brown claimed that DJ Malaya and seven other men ganged up on him and beat him up until he fell unconscious.

Manotoc is the son of Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos and the grandson of former President Ferdinand Marcos.

He has not commented on Brown's accusations although in a visit to the Taguig police a few days after the incident, he issued a public apology, without mentioning who it was directed at.

Asked why it took the family a month to press charges against Manotoc, Banico said: "We needed time to think about the implications."

ELEKSYON 2007

# A family affair in Camanava

**By Nancy C. Carvajal**

POLITICAL CANDIDATES IN the Camanava (Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas, Valenzuela) area have turned the upcoming elections into a family affair.

In Caloocan City, Macario "Boy" Asistio, a former mayor, is running against his brother, Luis "Baby" Asistio, the incumbent congressman of the second district.

"This is a democratic country and anyone, including my relatives, can seek an elective post," Luis said, adding that as far as he is concerned, "our family is not a political dynasty."

A further look at the Comelec list, however, shows that three persons related to them are also vying for elective posts. Macario's partner, former actress Nadia Montenegro, is running for Congress in the second district while Luis' son, Macario III, is running for city councilor.

A nephew, Albert "Bebong" Muñoz, whose girlfriend is actress Jolina Magdangal, hopes to become representative of the first district. He will be running against Rico Echiverri, son of Caloocan Mayor Enrico Echiverri, who is up for reelection.

In the lone congressional district of Navotas-Malabon, Jaye Lacson-Noel is running for congresswoman while her husband, Florencio Noel, is seeking reelection under the An Waray party-list. Jaye will be running against Alvin Sandoval, younger brother of Rep. Federico "Ricky" Sandoval, who, in turn, is running for Navotas mayor against Toby Tiangco, the incumbent.

In Valenzuela City, four brothers are candidates. Sherwin Gatchalian is seeking reelection as mayor. Two of his brothers, Rexlon and Weslie, are running for Congress in separate districts while Kenneth is a nominee for the party-list Anak.

Not to be outdone, Sherwin's rival, former Valenzuela Mayor Bobbit Carlos' cousin, city councilor Eddie Lozada, will run for congressman in the second district.

# Peewee disqualification bid junked

**By Julie M. Aurelio**

WITH ONLY A FEW DAYS LEFT before the May 14 polls, the Commission on Elections yesterday denied a petition seeking to disqualify Pasay City mayoral candidate Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad.

The petition, filed by Barangay 177 Captain Juanito Delmendo, sought to disqualify the former mayor on the grounds that he was already barred from holding public office because of his dismissal from the government service in January for allegedly anomalous garbage contracts.

The Comelec ruled that there was no "material misrepresentation on the part of Trinidad" when he decided to file his candidacy for mayor.

"In such instances, this Commission must yield to the presumption of eligibility for public office as it is not within this Commission's power to substitute its will for that of the electorate," the poll body said.

The ruling, a copy of which was given to the INQUIRER, was signed by Commissioners Florentino Tuason Jr., Rene Sarmiento and Nicodemio Ferrer.

Earlier in the day, Delmendo said he was withdrawing his petition for Trinidad's disqualification after his house was strafed by unidentified men on May 6. "Although I am doing this against my will, I need to protect my family," he said in Filipino.

Trinidad is seeking to reclaim his old post and is running against Pasay Rep. Consuelo Dy.

## METROBRIEFS

### Unreliable gun

THE HEAD of the police precinct in Plaza Miranda, Quiapo, was stabbed and wounded by a man yesterday after his gun jammed. Supt. Benito de Leon was brought to the hospital after Mario Dalicdic of Sitio Puting Bato, Navotas, attacked him. Initial reports said that De Leon was patrolling Plaza Miranda at about 7 a.m. when he saw Dalicdic wielding two knives. When he ordered the suspect to surrender his weapons, the latter lunged at him. The police official drew his gun but it refused to fire and Dalicdic stabbed him. Other policemen then came to De Leon's rescue and shot the suspect. Dalicdic, on the other hand, was brought to the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center in Sta. Cruz for observation.

*Cyrian Agujo*

### Big lapse in security

AN ARMORED van of Security Bank carrying an undetermined amount of cash was seized by five heavily armed men yesterday afternoon in Makati's central business district. The police said the van, with body number 61, was parked at the corner of Rufino and Esteban Streets in Legazpi Village when the armed unidentified suspects arrived on board two vehicles. They then boarded the armored van, leaving one of their vehicles behind. The group encountered no resistance at all as the van's security guards were inside the bank escorting a teller, the police said. Makati police chief, Supt. Gilbert Cruz, criticized the bank guards, saying they practically "invited" the robbers since they left the armored van's doors open. "We will investigate why they were too relaxed in driving a van containing money," he said.

*Kimberly Tan*

# Staking my journalism career on paraplegic

**ON TARGET**

*Ramon Tulfo*

THANK HEAVENS, WITNESSES had jotted down the plate number of the vehicle allegedly used by the abductors of Jonas Joseph Burgos. Otherwise, the search for him would have become futile!

The license plate has been traced to a vehicle impounded inside an Army camp in Bulacan.

At least, police investigators now know where to look for Burgos, son of press freedom icon Joe Burgos, and who to investigate.

That is, if the investigators do not receive orders from the higher-ups to lay off the case.

If the Army is involved—and there are strong indications it is because of the vehicle allegedly used in the abduction—then the buck will stop at the doorsteps of the Commander in chief, President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The international community is watching what Ms Arroyo will do in the Burgos case.

The case will be a test on whether or not Ms Arroyo is in complete control of the military.

***

**The Burgos abduction case reminds us of the abduction-murder of publicist Bubby Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito.**

**The perpetrators in both abductions used the same modus operandi: The victims were accosted or flagged down in public in broad daylight.**

**There was no apparent fear of being recognized on the part of the abductors.**

**The abductors of Dacer and Corbito were allegedly members of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) under then National Police chief Panfilo Lacson, who's now running for reelection for senator.**

**The abductors of Burgos could be members of the Army intelligence.**

**Let's hope and pray Jonas Burgos is still alive and kept in some military intelligence safehouse.**

***

For the umpteenth time, I am asking the Court of Appeals to speed up the case of Ronald "Jeff" Quesada, a paralytic convicted of rape by a Bulacan judge.

The appellate court has been sitting on the case since it was brought there last year.

Could this be because Jeff is a nobody?

I ask the honorable members of the division handling Jeff's appeal to visit him at the maximum security compound in the National Penitentiary and see his condition for themselves.

Jeff is a quadriplegic, meaning he can't move his hands and feet.

He has to be spoonfed by the person attending to his meals.

He can't go to the toilet without being carried by two persons.

I am staking my years in journalism for Jeff's innocence.

If it can be proven "beyond reasonable doubt"—as the lawyers are wont to say in court—that Jeff indeed committed rape, then I will resign and retire to my farm in Palawan to plant *camote*.

***

**I also appeal to the Supreme Court to investigate Bulacan Regional Trial Court Judge Andres Soriano for convicting Jeff.**

**He should be made to explain how he arrived at the ridiculous decision condemning a complete paralytic to a life in prison for rape.**

**The Philippines is probably the only country in the world where a complete paralytic faces the prospect of spending time in jail for rape.**

***

Butuan City Regional Trial Court Judge Augustus L. Calo reportedly disobeyed an order from Chief Justice Reynato Puno on the indiscriminate issuance of temporary restraining orders (TROs).

Calo allegedly issued four TROs against mining firms using a public road in Tubay, Agusan del Norte.

The mining firms' business operations have allegedly come to a virtual stop as a result of the judge's move to prevent them from using the public road.

# Makati's Binay seeks dismissal of SPD chief

**By DJ Yap and Julie M. Aurelio**

MAKATI MAYOR JEJOMAR BINAY has asked the Philippine National Police and the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to replace the director of the Southern Police District for allegedly engaging in partisan politics.

Binay, who is seeking reelection, sought the immediate dismissal of Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales for "clearly showing his support" for administration candidates in the city.

"In all my years as a government official and as a politician, this is the first time I have experienced firsthand glaring acts of partisanship on the part of a ranking officer of the PNP," Binay said.

In a statement, the mayor said Rosales' alleged biases could cast doubts on the credibility of the SPD and result in "political instability" in Makati on Election Day.

## Special treatment?

Binay accused the police official of favoring the candidacies of the sons of Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. chair Efraim Genuino, Erwin and Anthony, who are running for representative in the second district and councilor in the first district, respectively.

Erwin is pitted against the mayor's daughter, Abigail while Anthony is running against Binay's son, Jun-Jun, who is seeking reelection as councilor in the first district.

Binay cited Rosales' alleged partisan acts, such as the involvement of several SPD policemen in the Genuinos' campaign and the arrest of several Makati employees who were caught taking down posters of the Genuinos.

"The actions of Chief Superintendent Rosales, to my mind, constitute political partisanship, which is prohibited under the law," he said in a letter to PNP chief Director General Oscar Calderon and Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos.

"In the interest of honest, orderly and peaceful elections in Makati and in the interest of restoring the people's faith in our democracy and in the impartiality of the PNP, I urge you to grant my request," Binay said.

The mayor also took Rosales to task for deploying what he called an unusually large number of police personnel within the city without so much as giving him the courtesy of being told about the move.

## Defense

In a text message to the INQUIRER, Rosales defended his actions.

"The bottom line here is I want an orderly and peaceful election and I will not tolerate the proliferation of goons and guns," the message read. "What we are doing in Makati is similar to what we are doing in the six other areas which are under my jurisdiction," he added.

# Prof in sexual harassment case says charge 'fabricated'

**By Margaux C. Ortiz**

SAYING HE HAD BEEN UNFAIRLY accused, a theater actor and director told the INQUIRER the other day that the sexual harassment charges filed against him by one of his students were fabricated.

Arsenio Lizaso, a professor of mass communications at St. Paul University (formerly St. Paul College) in Quezon City, said his student filed the charges against him "because she had no legitimate excuse for failing nine out of 10 of her subjects that semester."

"She felt betrayed because I was supposed to help her, and she did not expect that I would also give her a failing mark," he added.

According to him, he first met his accuser in 2004 when the school's nuns asked him to help her with her subjects.

"The girl had just shifted from nursing to mass communications, and the nuns said she may have a potential in broadcast journalism," Lizaso said.

The professor said he became close to the student, guiding her in her classes and helping her with her schoolwork. However, during the first semester of school year 2005-2006, the girl seldom attended her classes, including his, the teacher said.

"It would have been impossible for me to text and call her all the time, as she had accused me of doing," Lizaso said. More importantly, according to the theater director, he was "terribly busy" during that time. "I was preparing for the 31st ITI-UNESCO World Congress from July 2005 to June 2006. It would have been inconceivable for me to waste my time harassing somebody," he said.

Because of her habitual absences, Lizaso said the girl failed all but one of her subjects.

Lizaso also denied having kissed the girl on the face, saying he was with his production staff on the night he was supposed to have met his student at Club Filipino.

The Quezon City Prosecutor's Office last week found probable cause in the sexual harassment case filed against Lizaso, saying the respondent took advantage of his moral ascendancy to obtain sexual favors from his student.

The case was elevated to the Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 31. Court records showed that the respondent had posted a P2,000 cash bond for his temporary liberty.

In his resolution, Assistant City Prosecutor Ben de la Cruz said the complainant accused Lizaso of frequently calling her up and sending her text messages containing indecent proposals with sexual innuendos from November 2005 to March 2006.

The complainant also alleged that in March 2006, Lizaso told her to meet him in Club Filipino in San Juan so she could submit her school project to him. "The respondent allegedly managed to kiss the complainant on her face despite her efforts to evade this unwanted sexual transgression," the resolution said.

## DID YOU KNOW

TODAY is the 121st birth anniversary of Felix Manalo, founder of the Iglesia ni Cristo. He was born Felix Ysagun but used his mother's surname after her death. Baptized a Roman Catholic, Manalo joined different religious denominations until he established the INC. He died in April 1963, leaving behind a religious organization with millions of members.

*Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

# Queen Elizabeth has last laugh over Bush

WASHINGTON—BRITAIN'S QUEEN Elizabeth II had the last laugh over US President George W. Bush on Tuesday, a day after the gaffe-prone Bush nearly put her age at well over 200 years.

Concluding a six-day state visit to the United States, the queen hosted a return banquet for Bush and his wife Laura at the British embassy and, as she rose to give her toast, a mischievous grin came over her face.

"Mr. President, I wondered whether I should start this toast saying, 'When I was here in 1776'," the 81-year-old monarch said to huge laughs from the A-list dinner guests.

When his turn came, Bush replied: "Your Majesty, I can't top that one."

The latest Bush-ism had come on Monday during a ceremonial welcome for the queen and her husband, Prince Philip, outside the White House ahead of a lavish state banquet.

Bush said Elizabeth had visited the United States "in 17—in 1976" to mark the 200th anniversary of its Declaration of Independence from Britain. He then winked at the queen and joked: "She gave me a look that only a mother could give a child."

In Britain, scornful newspapers labeled Bush "Dumb Dubya" and said he has a "gift for the gaffe."

At the British embassy, the queen and Prince Philip reciprocated the White House dinner with a menu that included wild Scottish smoked salmon, roast rib of veal, stacked carrots and Dauphinoise potatoes.

Aside from British ambassador David Manning and top Bush administration officials, the guests included Democratic presidential contender Hillary Clinton. The New York senator's husband, former president Bill Clinton, was not present.

The queen wore a gold lace cocktail dress and a Brazilian aquamarine and diamond necklace with matching earrings. Laura Bush wore a navy silk embroidered cocktail dress designed for her by Oscar de la Renta.

The men wore black-tie tuxedos, in contrast to the white-tie and tails affair at the White House Monday—the most formal yet of the six-year Bush presidency. *AFP*

**QUEEN Elizabeth II (right) laughs as President Bush makes remarks during a dinner at the British Embassy on Tuesday, May 8 in Washington.** AP

# Pressure mounts on WB president

WASHINGTON—EUROPEAN OFficials voiced fresh concerns about World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz's leadership, increasing pressure for his resignation amid revelations that he broke bank rules in arranging a pay package for his girlfriend.

As questions mounted Tuesday about Wolfowitz's ability to continue to run the poverty-fighting institution, the White House appeared to take a bit of a hands-off approach, with presidential spokesperson Tony Snow directing most questions about Wolfowitz to the World Bank.

Snow reaffirmed President George W. Bush's support for Wolfowitz, but would not say whether he is insisting to allies or others that Wolfowitz remain on the job.

Critics—including many European countries, many on the bank's staff, aid groups and others—want Wolfowitz to resign. They contend the controversy has tarnished the institution's reputation and could hobble its ability to raise billions of dollars from countries around the world to bankroll a bank program to provide financial help to poor nations.

"What we need is a president with a good reputation and integrity," Dutch Finance Minister Wouter Bos said at a meeting of European finance officials in Brussels, Belgium. Bos went on to say that he has "serious doubts" about the integrity of Wolfowitz.

Belgium's Finance Minister Didier Reynders struck a similar chord, saying: "It is impossible to go around the world speaking about good governance without good governance at the World Bank."

By tradition, the World Bank has been run by an American. Bush tapped Wolfowitz, a move that was approved by the bank's board. The United States keenly wants to keep that tradition firmly intact.

"We still support President Wolfowitz," Snow said Tuesday. But he added that Bush "is not getting directly, personally involved to my knowledge ... The conversations right now are not between the administration and the World Bank. I think it's proper to let the process work itself out rather than trying to insinuate ourselves in it."

While acknowledging the Bush administration's continued support for Wolfowitz, "the focus here really should be on poverty alleviation and the core mission of the bank," said State Department spokesperson Sean McCormack. "The issue of development and poverty alleviation around the world is too important to allow us to be distracted by these proceedings that are ongoing internal to the World Bank. *AP*

**BIBLICAL TOMB**

**This undated photo shows an aerial view of the hilltop compound of Herodium near the west Bank town of Hebron where an Israeli archaeologist found the tomb of King Herod, the legendary builder of ancient Jerusalem and the Holy Land.** AP

# Scientists plan website on all life on Earth

WASHINGTON—IN A WHALE-sized project, the world's scientists plan to compile everything they know about all of Earth's 1.8 million known species and put it all on one website, open to everyone.

The effort, called the Encyclopedia of Life, will include species descriptions, pictures, maps, videos, sound, sightings by amateurs, and links to entire genomes and scientific journal papers. Its first pages of information will be shown on Wednesday in Washington where the massive effort is being announced by some of the world's leading scientific institutions and universities. The project will take about 10 years to complete.

"It's an interactive zoo," said James Edwards, who will be the encyclopedia's executive director. Edwards currently helps run a global biodiversity information system.

If the new encyclopedia progresses as planned, it should fill about 300 million pages, which, if lined up end-to-end, would be more than 83,682 kilometers long, able to stretch twice around the world at the equator.

The MacArthur and Sloan foundations have given a total $12.5 million to pay for the first two and a half years of the massive effort, but it will be free and accessible to everyone.

The pages can be adjusted so that they provide useful information for both a schoolchild and a research biologist alike, with an emphasis on encouraging "citizen-scientists" to add their sightings. While amateurs can contribute in clearly marked side pages, the key detail and science parts of the encyclopedia will be compiled and reviewed by experts. *AP*

## WorldBriefs

### AIDS drugs deal

NEW YORK—Former US president Bill Clinton announced a deal with two generic drug companies on Tuesday to slash the cost of second line anti-retroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS patients in the developing world. The deal, reached in partnership with international drugs organization UNITAID and generic manufacturers Cipla and Matrix, would affect 66 developing nations in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, he said. Second-line treatment is required in patients who develop resistance to first-line drugs and costs around 10 times the price of the initial therapy. *AFP*

### East Timor's runoff poll

DILI—A presidential runoff poll in tiny East Timor got off to a smooth start on Wednesday, an EU observer said, as voters faced a choice between Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta and former guerrilla fighter Francisco Guterres. Dili appeared calm and at a polling station in an elementary school voters were quietly queuing to cast their ballots, amid relaxed security as a couple of UN police looked on. Ramos-Horta and Guterres—a former independence fighter nicknamed "Lu'Olo" and president of the ruling Fretilin party—won the most votes in the first round, but none of the eight candidates won a clear majority, forcing a runoff. *Reuters*

### 4 terror suspects arrested

LONDON—British police arrested four people on Wednesday in connection with the suicide bombings which killed 52 bus and subway passengers in London in 2005. Two men and a woman were arrested in West Yorkshire and a 23-year-old man was arrested in the West Midlands in the area around Birmingham, Metropolitan Police said. All were arrested on suspicion of the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism and were being taken to London for interrogation, police said. Searches were under way at two flats in Birmingham, and at five addresses in West Yorkshire—two houses in Dewsbury, two houses the Beeston neighborhood in Leeds and one house in Batley, police said. *AP*

### Ukrainian coal mine blast

KIEV—A methane gas explosion deep underground in an eastern Ukrainian coal mine killed two miners and injured 13 early Wednesday, emergency officials said. The methane leak occurred about 900 meters beneath the surface of the Krasnolymanska mine in the eastern Donetsk region, said Ihor Krol, spokesperson for Ukraine's Emergency Situations Ministry. He said 28 miners were doing drilling work in the area when the leak occurred, triggering an explosion and fire. *AP*

# Former foes share power in N. Ireland

BELFAST—NORTHERN IRELAND ENTERED a new era Tuesday as Protestant and Catholic arch-foes were sworn in to share power and restore self-rule in the long-troubled province.

Protestant leader Ian Paisley, Northern Ireland's new First Minister, said there was a real chance for "lasting peace" as he took office with Catholic former terrorist Martin McGuinness as his deputy.

"Northern Ireland has come to a time of peace. A time when hate will no longer rule," said Paisley, the firebrand clergyman of the Democratic Unionists (DUP). "How good it will be to be part of a wonderful healing in this province."

British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who hopes the Northern Ireland deal will form a key part of his legacy as he prepares to stand down, said the "chains of history" were being cast off.

"Look back and we see centuries pockmarked by conflict, hardship, even hatred among the peoples of these islands," he said. "Look forward today and we see the chance at last to escape those heavy chains of history." London and Dublin hope the autonomous administration will bring permanent peace and stability to Northern Ireland, a British-ruled province where more than 3,000 people have been killed in sectarian violence since the late 1960s.

Sinn Fein, the political wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), has for decades pressed for Northern Ireland to be re-united with the Irish Republic, while unionists insist the province remain a part of the United Kingdom.

The violence largely ended after the 1998 Good Friday peace deal, but efforts for a permanent settlement stalled when power-sharing was suspended in October 2002 over charges of a republican spy ring.

Those efforts were revived by Blair and Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern last November in the Scottish town of Saint Andrews, where a deal was brokered to restart power-sharing in March.

The real breakthrough came on March 26, when Paisley and Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams finally agreed to share power, albeit with a six-week delay, taking them to Tuesday's historic inauguration. *AFP*

PERFORMANCE, SAFETY, STYLE

A combination of refined on-road handling and rugged off-road performance

In 2006, the Suzuki Grand Vitara was reborn, ushering in a new generation of Suzuki vehicles built to satisfy the needs of people who live active lifestyles. Its complete transformation leads the Suzuki brand to new levels of refinement and style at a value-packed price. For 2007, the Suzuki Grand Vitara is sure to impress on challenging off-road trails and drives around town, with a powerful 2.7-liter, V6 engine, advanced chassis design and available four-wheel drive, an extensive list of safety features and interior amenities and sleek styling - inside and out.

Standard DOHC V6 Power and Available Four-Wheel-Drive Traction

The standard 2.7-liter, V6, 24-valve DOHC engine delivers 185 horsepower at 6,000 rpm and 250 Nm at 4,500 rpm. The engine gives the Grand Vitara a tow rating of 3,000 pounds - enough to haul light recreational boats, personal watercraft or motorcycles - ideally, Suzuki motorcycles.

The Grand Vitara is fitted with an electronically controlled five-speed automatic transmission. Very capable off-road, it is equipped with an excellent approach, break-over and departure angles, and 7.9 inches of ground clearance, (7.4 inches for rear-wheel-drive models).

The Grand Vitara also offers a sophisticated available Four-Mode full-time four-wheel-drive system with two-speed transfer case. On the road, drivers have the security of full-time four-wheel drive, and when traveling off-road, drivers can use an interior-mounted switch to engage the center differential lock. If the going is really slow, the driver can select the Low (4L Lock) mode for low-speed power and traction.

*Advanced Structural Engineering and Chassis Design*

All Grand Vitara models feature a new, lightweight yet rigid unibody construction enhanced with a built-in ladder frame to offer the best of both worlds - a refined on-road ride and the rugged off-road performance expected from Suzuki SUVs. The structure is teamed with four-wheel independent suspension - MacPherson struts in front and a multi-link design in the rear - to provide precise handling both on-road and off-road. The Grand Vitara also features large, vented front disc brakes and rear drum brakes and power-assisted rack-and-pinion steering.

*Uncompromised Safety Features*

Every Grand Vitara model is fitted with active safety features, including ABS with electronic brake-force distribution (EBD) and Electronic Stability Program (ESP)1, including traction control. The ESP uses a variety of electronic sensors to measure vehicle speed, steering wheel angle and yaw. This information is sent to a central controller that can intervene as needed. Under certain conditions, such as when unintended oversteer or understeer is detected, the system can apply individual brakes and reduce engine torque to help the driver maintain the proper cornering line.

Together with the traction control system, the ESP helps ensure vehicle stability and optimum cornering, handling in take off or acceleration, emergency maneuvers, or driving on slippery road surfaces.

The Grand Vitara also features six airbags as standard equipment - driver and front passenger seat-mounted side-impact airbags supplemental restraint system (SRS), advanced dual-stage front airbag SRS, advanced weight-sensing front passenger airbag SRS and front and rear side-curtain airbags.

The three-point driver and front passenger seat belts feature shoulder height adjustment. In the rear seat, each passenger is provided with a three-point seat belt system and a headrest. The rear child-seat LATCH system (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children), along with rear-door child safety locks, are designed to help protect young rear-seat passengers.

The innovative stamped steel unibody with built-in ladder frame provides comprehensive protection, with features such as a reinforced cabin with the added safety of a head-impact protection padding and front and rear side-impact door beams designed to help maintain the integrity of the passenger compartment.

In the event of a collision with a pedestrian, the hood is designed to absorb some of the impact and help protect against serious head injuries. The front end and the bumper use energy-absorbing materials to help reduce the possibility of serious leg injuries.

# HP introduces affordable, space-saving thin client

Manila, Philippines –The HP Compaq t5720 Thin Client is perfect for businesses that need compact yet powerful user-interface solutions. The t5720 delivers desktop-like features and support for local applications in an attractively small chassis that can be set either vertically or horizontally, making the t5720 fit perfectly on a desktop or mounted conveniently on a wall or under a desk.

Despite its slim size, the t5720 Thin Client is full of features: it's powered by the AMD Geode NX 1500 processor with 512 MB of Flash memory and a standard complement of either 256 MB or 512 MB of DDR RAM. An optional PCI slot allows a broad range of expansion options, from additional memory to video cards. The t5720 also ships pre-installed with Genuine Windows XP Embedded SP2 and Sygate Security Agent, for dependable reliability and protection straight out of the box.

"The HP Compaq t5720 Thin Client with Microsoft Windows XP Embedded is an ideal interface solution for businesses with minimal work areas or other space concerns. It delivers powerfully versatile features in a compact footprint at an affordable price," said Bernadette Nacario, PSG Country General Manager, HP Philippines.

**Key features:**

- Reliability: Solid-state design means no moving parts, which results in higher reliability, lower ownership costs, and extended product life.
- Design security: HP makes it easy to lock down user settings and parameters on the client, or add a Smartcard reader for user authentication. Additionally, all critical user data and applications reside on your secure, centralized server. HP Sygate Security Agent is pre-installed on all t5720 Thin Clients.
- Improved manageability: HP's alliance with Altiris brings a leading management solution to the thin client market. Altiris Deployment Solution's standards-based, advanced thin client management solution helps reduce the costs of deploying, updating, and maintaining your thin clients. Free with each HP client!
- Open operating system: The HP Compaq t5720 Thin Client offers Genuine Windows XP Embedded operating system with Citrix ICA, Microsoft's latest RDP client, Internet Explorer 6.0, Windows Media Player 9.0, and terminal emulations.
- Processing power: The processing power your workers need for a great server-based computing experience, whether running general office applications or your specific line of business software on a terminal server.
- Smart graphics: Support for HP's latest monitors with superior resolution, outstanding color, and high refresh rates.
- Invisible client: HP's unique thermal design allows the t5720 to be mounted in many orientations. Recapture desktop space by utilizing HP Quick Release mounting solution. Chassis can be set either vertically or horizontally for positioning on a desktop or mounting on a wall, under a desk, or even on the back of a compliant monitor.
- Connectivity: Advanced connectivity features include a wide range of ports and support for options including smart card readers, modems, and other common options.

The HP Compaq t5720 Thin Client is affordably priced at just PhP26,988 (SRP), and is backed by HP's 3-year warranty on labor, onsite, and parts.

## The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

# France's Sarkozy sails into storm

PARIS—PRESIDENT-ELECT Nicolas Sarkozy may have been seeking some relaxation, but his Mediterranean getaway has instead sailed him straight into his first storm as French newspapers slammed Wednesday his luxury yacht cruise as ostentatious.

The Depeche du Midi slapped Sarkozy for "an immoderate taste for super luxury" over the trip on a 60-meter yacht belonging to his billionaire friend Vincent Bollore.

The newspaper compared his behavior to a "nouveau riche who has just hit the jackpot. But the Elysee is not the national lottery."

Sarkozy boarded the vessel in Malta with his wife Cecilia and their 10-year-old son Louis on Monday at the start of a three-day break to relax after the right-winger's emphatic weekend election victory.

The rental price for the yacht which can accommodate 12 people would normally be up to 200,000 euros ($270,000) per week in the high season.

"A way of showing-off money that recalls Silvio Berlusconi," the billionaire former Italian prime minister who never let office hinder his high-flying lifestyle, concluded La Republique des Pyrenees.

The conservative Le Figaro was bewildered by the change in plans from a vacation on the French Mediterranean island of Corsica to the luxury cruise which has caused "concern among a number of friends of Nicolas Sarkozy." La Republique du Centre noted that the "monastic retreat turned into a luxury cruise. That change of direction alters the image of Nicolas Sarkozy as an appealing, humble leader that was projected Sunday night."

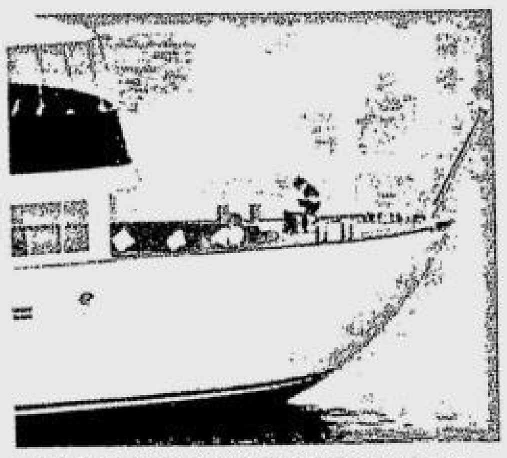
Sarkozy "will be our first American-style president," wrote L'Independant du Midi. He is a "great admirer of the country where money and luxury are considered as mandatory symbols of success."

"Go for it!" jeered the left-wing L'Humanite. "Enough of the stirring speeches about forgotten workers or the France that gets up early," it added.

While Sarkozy relaxed and strategized on a luxury yacht in the Mediterranean, back home "anti-Sarko" protests rumbled on into a third consecutive night.

Sarkozy's secretive high-budget retreat was beginning to draw criticism back in France, with one Socialist senator saying the 52-year-old was living "in another world." "Mr. Sarkozy never said he would be the president of the poor. He is the president of the CAC 40" Paris stock exchange, Jean-Luc Melenchon told France Inter radio.

Sarkozy's election triumph has sparked protests across the country, many of them violent. They began late Sunday and continued Monday night, prompting the leader of the defeated Socialists to appeal for calm. *AFP*



**FRENCH President-elect Nicolas Sarkozy (left) takes a phone call next to his son Louis on a yacht on May 8, near Malta.** AFP

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**WHAT'S INSIDE**

**Cavs go** 2-0 vs NJ nets /A26

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**POC wants** athletes' dorm in Clark /A25

# Harbour eyes payback vs Burger

HARBOUR CENTRE TRIES TO SOLIDIFY ITS HOLD OF THE lead when it battles first-round tormentor Burger King in the 2007 PBL Unity Cup today at the Olivarez Sports Center.

The Batang Pier seek a sixth straight win at 2 p.m. against the slumping Whoppers, who dealt their only loss so far in a game where Harbour groped for form with its stars just back from the Seaba Champion's Cup campaign.

Toyota Balintawak, which gave Harbour Centre a big scare last Saturday, tests a rejuvenated Henkel Sista squad in the main game at 4 p.m.

The Super Sealers are gunning for a fourth straight win after a 0-4 start that included a 78-71 loss to the Road Kings, who are in solo fourth with a 3-3 win-loss card.

After winning its first four games, Burger King is hard-pressed to avoid a third straight defeat following successive setbacks inflicted by Toyota Balintawak and San Miguel-Magnolia.

The Whoppers, who rely mainly on Ronjay Buenafe, Mike Bravo and JR Quinahan, must stop Jason Castro, unstoppable in Harbour Centre's last two victories.

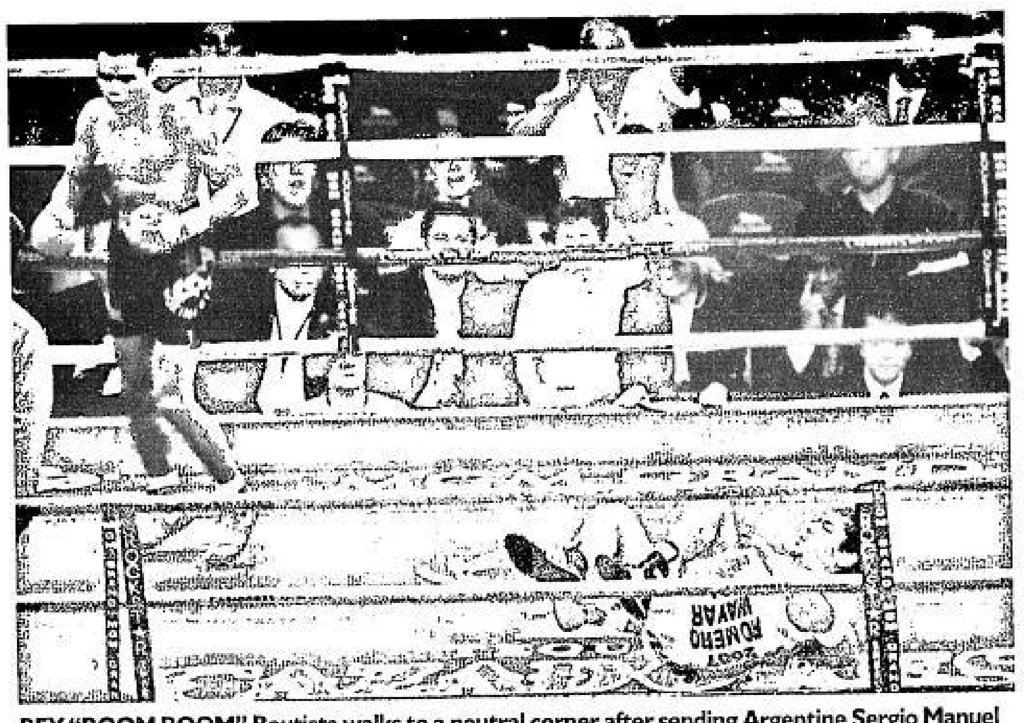
Aside from Castro, who unloaded 12 points in the final quarter, including the game-clinching three-pointer in Harbour's 73-70 win over Toyota Balintawak, Burger King has to also limit the expected offensive damage from Chico Lanete, Al Vergara, JC Intal and Jojo Duncil.

The Road Kings also have to stop a virtual one-man army to get past Henkel Sista.

The league's new hotshot is Ryan Reyes, a 6-foot-1 Fil-American who arrived only last week and scored 18 and 20 points in his first two outings. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

| STANDINGS | W | L |
|---|---|---|
| Harbour | 5 | 1 |
| C. Lhuillier | 5 | 2 |
| Burger King | 4 | 2 |
| Toyota | 3 | 3 |
| Henkel-Sista | 3 | 4 |
| Magnolia | 2 | 5 |
| Dazz | 1 | 6 |

**GAMES TODAY**
*(Olivarez Sports Center)*
2 p.m.—Burger King vs Harbour Centre
4 p.m.—Toyota vs Henkel Sista



REY "BOOM BOOM" Bautista walks to a neutral corner after sending Argentine Sergio Manuel Medina to the canvas in their recent fight in Las Vegas. Bautista won by decision. DONG SECUYA

# Bautista, Banal back home from US today

UNDEFEATED FILIPINO FIGHTERS REY "Boom Boom" Bautista and AJ "Bazooka" Banal are scheduled to arrive today following their victorious campaign underneath the Oscar De la Hoya-Floyd Mayweather Jr. superbout last Saturday at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas.

The two fighters will be accompanied by their chief handler Antonio L. Aldeguer and manager Michael Aldeguer. Also traveling with the group is their Filipino promoter Sammy "Don King" Gello-ani and trainer Edito Villamor.

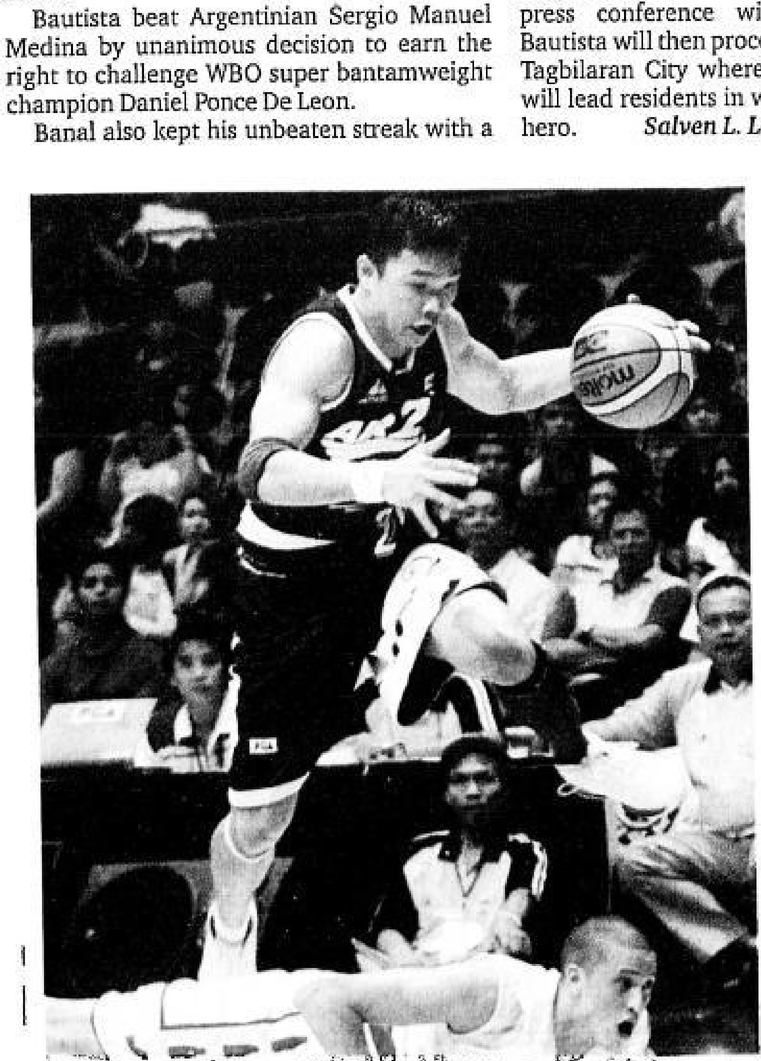
Bautista beat Argentinian Sergio Manuel Medina by unanimous decision to earn the right to challenge WBO super bantamweight champion Daniel Ponce De Leon.

Banal also kept his unbeaten streak with a unanimous decision verdict over Mexican Juan Alberto Rosas.

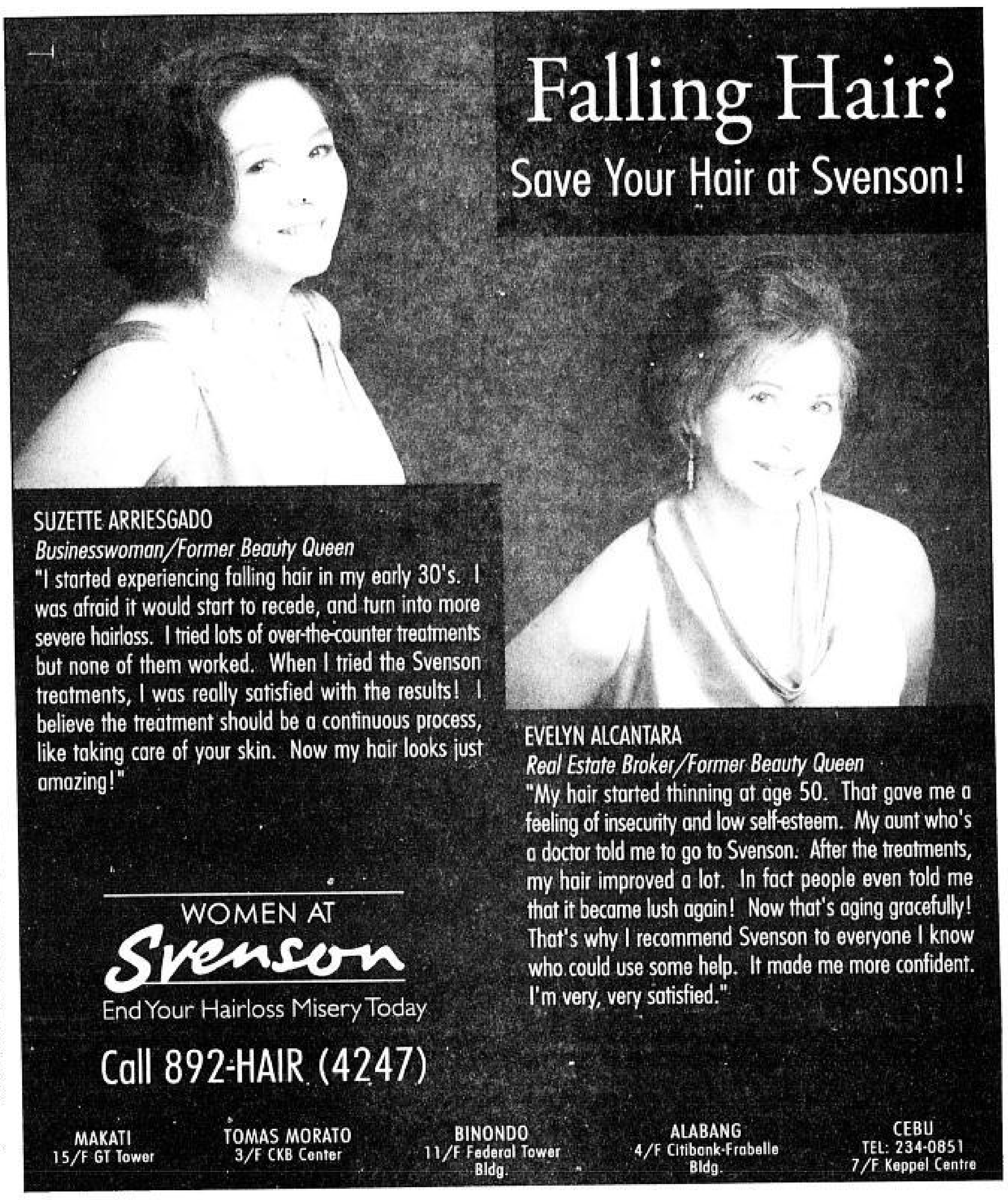
From the airport, the two will proceed to ABS-CBN's Magandang Umaga Pilipinas morning program, before heading to the Manila City Hall to pay a courtesy call on Mayor Lito Atienza.

The duo will also grace a boxing event in Quezon City organized by Joseph Juico and promoted by Sammy Gello-ani in the afternoon.

They fly to Cebu at 8:30 tomorrow morning, then proceed to the Marriott Hotel for a press conference with Cebu mediamen. Bautista will then proceed to his hometown in Tagbilaran City where Mayor Dan Neri Lim will lead residents in welcoming their boxing hero. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*



**HOPSCOTCH** Air21 swingman Gary David vaults over a fallen John Arigo of Coca-Cola as he attempts to go in transition in last night's PBA Fiesta Cup game between the Express and the Tigers. Air21 managed to squeeze out an 86-85 victory over Coca-Cola. *See full story on A18.* AUGUST DELA CRUZ



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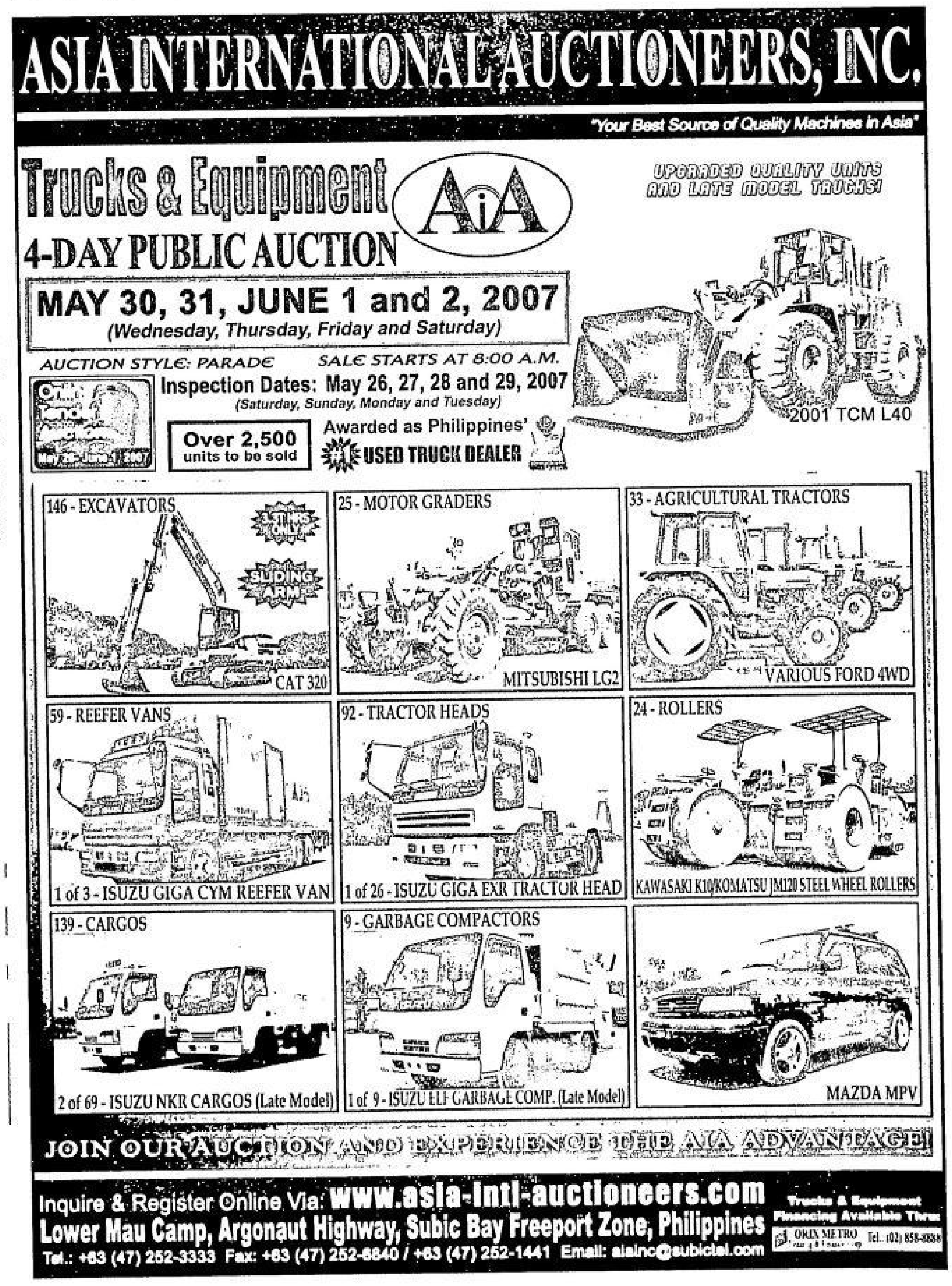

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# Ateneo subdues San Sebastian cagers

ATENEO DE MANILA WALKED THE tightrope before beating San Sebastian College, 75-73, to complete a sweep of Group C in the 2007 Nike Summer League basketball tournament at the FEU gym.

Chris Tiu joined forces with Rabeh Al Hussaini and Jai Reyes to lead the Norman Black mentored-Eagles to their fifth straight win in the tournament sponsored by Nike and supported by ABS CBN.

ABS CBN will broadcast the quarterfinals up to the winner-take-all finals live via Studio 23.

Tiu, a 5-foot-11 find from Xavier School, topscored with 15 points while the 6-7 Al Hussaini added 11. The 5-9 Reyes contributed 10 points. Jim Viray and Jimbo Aquino carried the fight for the Stags with 17 and 16 points, respectively.

In other seniors games, San Beda College-Manila routed sister school San Beda College-Alabang, 93-67; and Adamson University subdued Don Bosco Technical College, 85-57.

Jerome Villanueva scattered 22 points for the Red Lions, who posted their first win in three games.

Marvin Antonio and Eric Saguitan added 16 and 14 points for SBC-Manila. Alex Macaulay paced SBC-Alabang with 15.

Adamson relied on new recruit Janus Lozada and Junard Yambot in beating DBTC for its third straight win in Group D behind Letran College.

Lozada scored 17 points, while Yambot added 11 points.

In the juniors division, Letran College NCAA rival San Beda Manila, 78-75, for its fourth straight win in Group A and a slot in the quarterfinals.

Kevin Alas routed all guards thrown against him, scoring 20 points for Letran.

Len Khobuntin added 15 points, John Noble had 14 and Rico Munsayac contributed 10 points for Squires.

Niko Salva topscored with 26 points for the Red Cubs, followed by James Panaligan with 16 and Demis Bernas contributed 12 points. The Red Cubs dropped to 2-1.

In the women's division, Far Eastern University outplayed St. Benilde, 61-38, for its fourth straight win in Group B.

Katrina Reyes fired 11 points and hauled down 12 rebounds to lead the Lady Tamaraws.

# Arum joins Pacman today

## Top Rank honcho arrives in GenSan

By Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

VANCOUVER, CANADA—AMERICAN FIGHT PROmoter Bob Arum is set to arrive in General Santos City today to fulfill a commitment to join boxing champion Manny Pacquiao in the last few days of the election campaign.

ARUM: I am here to do what I promised.

Pacquiao is running for the lone Congress seat in South Cotabato against the incumbent Darlene Antonino-Custodio in what has become a keenly awaited political contest.

"I am here to do what I promised. I am here for Manny no matter what," Arum told this writer during a stopover here from Las Vegas on the way to Manila.

As a foreigner, Arum is barred from meddling in the political exercise and cannot give any contribution, monetary or otherwise, to boost Pacquiao's campaign.

As for Pacquiao's future ring plans, Arum said the Filipino icon might be seeing action again sometime in October or November with anyone among Joan Guzman, Humberto Soto and Marco Antonio Barrera as a probable rival.

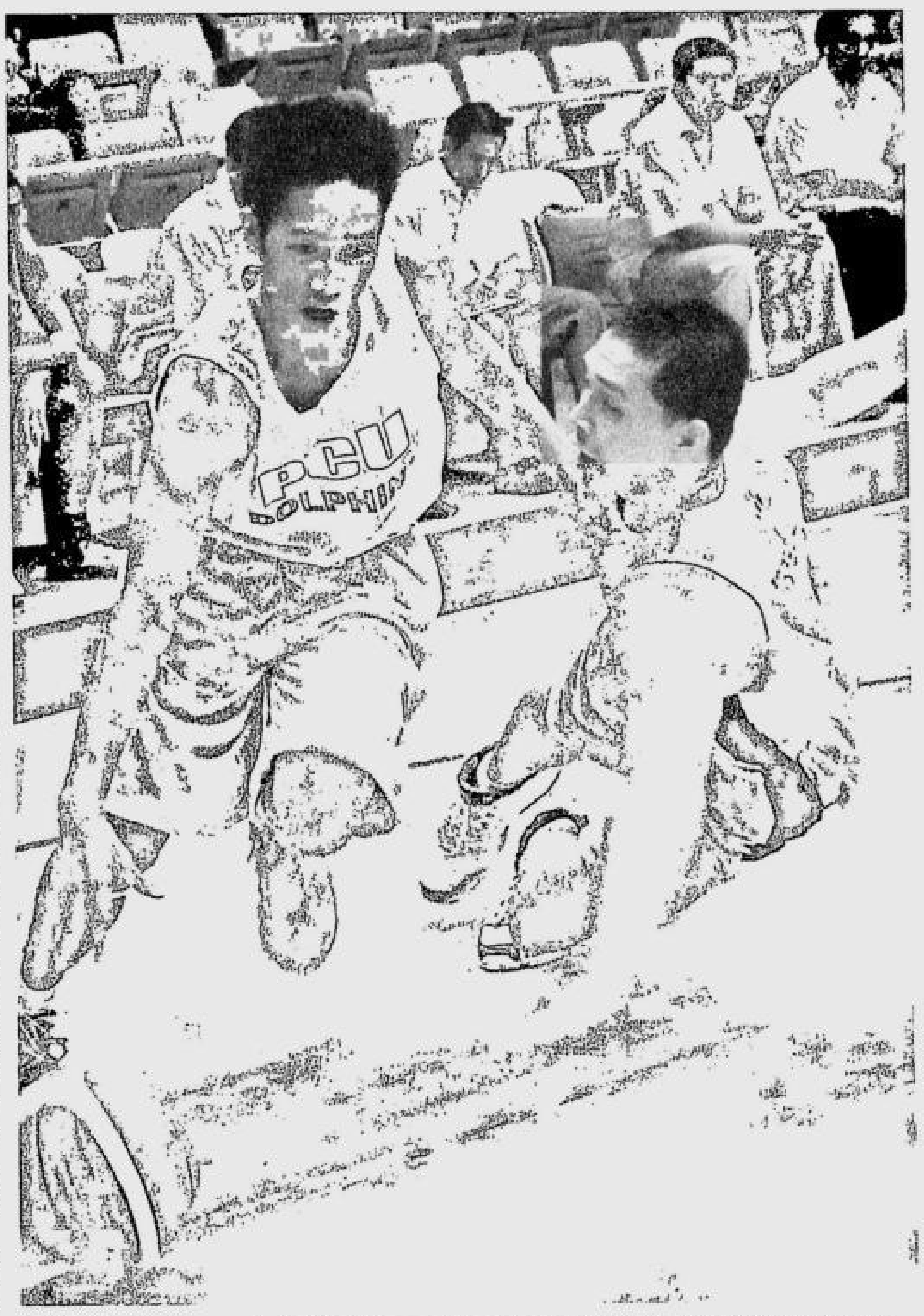
"If Manny wins the elections, that will make him a very, very unique individual, and that would open a lot of possibilities for him," said Arum.

Pacquiao chose to renew his promotional tie with Arum after beating Erik Morales late last year, in the process repudiating an earlier promotional agreement he signed with Golden Boy Promotions owned by Oscar De La Hoya.

Arum also added that all is set for Bobby Pacquiao's fight on June 9 against Humberto Soto. "If Bobby is in good shape, he has what it takes to perform and make it a difficult night for Soto," he said.

"Bobby is such a dangerous fighter if he trains well. That's for sure," Arum said.

The noted promoter said he will fly back to the US a day before the May 14 elections, adding he's confident Manny can pull this fight off.



PCU'S Lisztian Amparado (left) dribbles past Jose Rizal University's John Marion Wilson in their FilOil-Flying V Preseason Invitational Cup. *(See story on A25)* AUGUST DELA CRUZ

# Youth chess set June 23

THE 2007 SHELL NATIONAL YOUTH ACTIVE Chess Championships will start June 23-24 with the National Capital Region (NCR) eliminations at SM City Manila.

This year's province-hopping series, featuring players 20 years old and below (juniors) and 14 years old and below (kiddies), will have eight legs starting culminating in the grand finals in October at SM Megamall.

Registration forms are available at Shellane showrooms nationwide and at selected Shell depots/installations, service stations and local offices. For details, contact chief coordinator Alex Dinoy at 744-1664 or 0922-8288510 or local coordinators Mariano Cabugos (078 844-2894 Tuguegarao), German Francisco (0919-5658981 or 075 523-1165 Dagupan), Joselito Castro (043 723-2568/723-4246 Batangas), NM Cesar Mariano (033 336-6205/0919-2833826 Iloilo); Odilon Badilles (0926-5187156 Cebu); NA Ronnie Tabudlong (082 300-4260 or 0918-3590531 Davao) and engineer Carlos Florendo (0920-6279784 Zamboanga).

Top finishers of the event, which has produced the likes of GMs Mark Paragua and Nelson Mariano II, will converge in Manila on Oct. 20-21 for the grand finals at SM Megamall in Ortigas Center.

# So nears World Junior slot

YOUNG SENSATION WESLEY SO downed two opponents and moved closer toward a stint in the World Junior Chess Championships yesterday.

The 13-year-old So, bidding to become the country's youngest Grandmaster ever, crushed Melvin Polomata and Ian Gil Biag, respectively, to keep his share of the lead with National Master Julius Joseph de Ramos going to the ninth and final round of the 2007 National Junior chess championships at the Marketplace Shopping Center in Mandaluyong City.

De Ramos, 19, beat Emmanuel Emperado and Jerwell Andoy, respectively, to match So's 7.5 points in the tournament organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines. They drew in the sixth-round and won the rest of their matches.

So, gold medalist in the Asian inter-cities, will tackle James Bulicatin while De Ramos takes on Villanueva in the last round.

Kim Steven Yap bested Richielieu Salcedo to grab solo third place with 6.5 points.

Eleven players, led by Karl Victor Ochoa and Lennon Hart Salgados, shared fourth to 14th places with six points.

WESLEY SO: 13-year-old sensation

Ochoa, a veteran of the World Youth Chess Championship in Halkidiki, Greece, whipped Rene de Chavez and Haridas Pascua, while Salgados trounced Paolo Bautista and Vic Neil Villaneuva.

Equally impressive was WNM Aices Salvador, who toppled erstwhile solo leader Ylem Jose to grab the solo lead with seven points out of a possible eight in the girls division.

Salvador also won over Cherry Lynn Guiang in the seventh round.

Asian Games campaigner Jedara Docena also made her presence felt by humbling Ma. Zayrah de la Cruz and Letran bet Jan Jodilyn Fronda to move into a tie for second to third places with Jose with 6.5 points.

Fronda, who beat Maria Angeli Dimakiling in the seventh round, and Kimberly Jane Cunanan, who dumped Cerlin Anabieza, led three other players with six points.

With Fronda and Cunanan were Dimakiling, Guiang and Annie Montales.

Tournament director is Willie Abalos.

Meanwhile, National Master Efren Bagamasbad outclassed Renante Aureada in the final round to amass 8 points and bag the championship trophy and P30,000 in the recent 2007 Bicol chess Championship held at the Capitol Building, Legazpi City.

NMs Ronald Llavanes and Celestino Cain garnered 7.5 to tie for 2nd and 3rd and split P35,000. Llavanes. however, emerged runnerup due to a higher tie break.

# Red Bull missing Rico

**IN HUDDLE**

*Beth Celis*

TALK 'N TEXT head coach Derick Pumaren and his staff were surprised when their national players returned from a recent stint in the United States.

Instead of being in great physical shape, Asi (Taulava and RenRen Ritualo had gained so much weight their cheeks puffed out, giving the impression that they had undergone Botox treatment.

The coaching staff agreed only Jimmy Alapag looked in fighting condition.

"Jimmy has his own physical conditioning program which he strictly adheres to wherever he may be, rain, shine or snow," said Manong Derick, who was a most gracious host during the christening party of fourth child Fred Christian at the Kamayan Edsa last Sunday.

Derick and his staff never found out how Asi and RenRen gained those extra pounds. As for the staff's own physical conditioning activity, the group has decided to go into boxing, probably inspired by the Pacquiao fever.

* * *

**Although it was an old item, I couldn't help but ask MacMac Cardona, one of Manong's guests, how he got linked with showbiz siren Pauleen Luna a few month's back.**

**The cager denied the report.**

**He admitted though, that he now has a new girlfriend, not the one he had introduced to us about a year ago.**

***"Simple lang siya. Simple lang kasi ang gusto kong*** **girlfriend," MacMac said.**

* * *

The way things are going now for Red Bull, Barako management may no longer be inclined to loan out its marquee player Enrico Villanueva to the national team to fill the vacuum left by Rudy Hatfield, who had to attend to personal matters in the US.

Since Enrico was plucked out of his mother ballclub, the Barakos have lost two straight games (to Purefoods and Talk 'N Text) by an average of 20-plus points.

"His mother team needs him more than the national team," I heard somebody comment, during the recent birthday party of a ballclub owner.

"After all, the tournament in Iran will only be used for further training while the Seaba Men's championship qualifier in Ratchiburi, Thailand, will be a walk in the park for the nationals."

If at all, Enrico may be loaned out only in the Fiba Men's Championship in Tokoshima, Japan, which won't be until July when the 2007 PBA season is over.

The cager's name is included in the list of national players who are scheduled to leave for Tehran, Iran, today to compete in the Fiba-Asia Club Championship.

* * *

**On his second month, Kris Aquino and James Yap's son Baby James will be baptized at a Makati chapel.**

**Kris said she and James have limited the baby's ninongs and ninangs to "really close friends only."**

**"The ninangs are my cousin Rina Teopaco, Lucy Torres-Gomez, Claudine Barretto-Santiago and my ABS-CBN boss Cory Vidanes. We have a total of 10 godparents, four men, four women and two gays, Boy Abunda and my manager Deo Endrinal."**

**According to Kris, the ninongs are husband James' choices, which he hasn't finalized to this day.**

**"We had asked MVP (Manny V. Pangilinan), but he won't be in town on the day of Baby James' baptism," Kris said.**

**Today she and James are scheduled to pay a visit to the ailing mother-in-law of columnist/broadcaster Quinito Henson in a hospital.**

**"So many people had been so kind to me when I was hospitalized, I just want to pay it forward," Kris said.**

* * *

Multi-titled basketball coach Joe Lipa is strongly batting for the Asahan Mo Party List group organized by fellow UP alumnus, lawyer and senate secretary Oscar Yabes.

Asahan Mo is a nationwide organization established by persons with disabilities, together with parents and relatives of children with special needs.

Yabes, the guiding light behind Asahan Mo, was afflicted with polio at a tender age of 2, rendering his right arm non-functional.

**WINNER:** Switzerland's Patty Schnyder returns a ball to Italy's Roberta Vinci during the "German Open" tennis tournament in Berlin on Tuesday. Schnyder trounces Vinci, 6-0, 7-5. REUTERS

# Lim stuns Aguila for Masters title

UNHERALDED Manuel Lim Jr. came from behind to beat top seeded Kap Aguila, 2-0, and bag the Masters title in the recent 39th MTBA Open bowling championships at the New Bowling Inn on Taft Avenue.

Carrying the colors of Lions 1, Lim rolled games of 270 and 259 in the finals to down Aguila, who managed only 232 and 215 after gaining a twice-to-beat advantage for ruling the eliminations with an eight-game series of 2081.

Lim advanced to the finals by taking the second shootout match with 262, 20 pins ahead of first shootout match winner Garry Custodio of IFC 1.

Marvin Reyes of Prima 1, Custodio and Pinseekers' Esteban Tan finished third, fourth and fifth, respectively.

Reyes made up for his Masters' setback by ruling the all-events with 2539 after a close race with Jeryson Co, who tallied 2531. Co anchored his bid on his singles' triumph with 1106.

Madeline Llamas (1094) and Aguila (1082) ranked second and third to Co in the singles event.

The other winners in the tourney which drew 320 men's and women's bowlers from 80 teams were DATBA 3's Jerwin Po and JB Munoz (1552) in doubles and Vikings 1's John Co, Wilson Hernandez, Kim Chi and Jhake Santos (2893) in the team competition.

Prima's Marvin and Marjo Reyes (1530) and U & 1 3's Aldwin Ku and Renier Pasquin (1483) checked in second and third in doubles, while Mixed Team's Ernie Noto, Thing Asuncion, Lion Diamante and Sharwin Tee (2875) and another mixed squad composed of Tito Ngo, Jonathan Lim, Benny Tanlo and Steward Chua (2809) joined DATBA 3 in the team event's winning circle.

# 12-year-old Javi enjoys life on the fast lane

**By Marc Anthony Reyes**

YEARS BEFORE HE IS LEGALLY ALLOWED TO DRIVE a car, Javier Miguel Lopez Benitez already knows how it feels going at a speed of 130 kph.

Fear is not part of the feeling.

"You can't be scared if you want to win," said the 12-year-old Benitez.

This early, Benitez' credentials are glowing. He's the country's No. 1 bet in the junior ROK class and has compiled several years worth of experience in the Asian-level karting circuits here and abroad.

In his debut at age 9, he finished fifth among 14 racers from Indian, China, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore in the Asian karting championships cadet 85. He then worked his way up to podium finishes in Asian open junior karting competitions.

It is this wealth of experience that allows Benitez to speak authoritatively on the factors that have a huge effect on one's karting performance.

And he sounded like a veteran ace when he gave out tips when burning the track on a kart.

Karting 101: When overtaking in a hairpin turn, "you enter slow and exit fast, it can't be otherwise. Then you tail the driver in front just before the bend, try to beat him at the turn and inch your way inside. Never outside."

Benitez makes karting sound so easy and he is a karter by heart. But it isn't the only sport he excels in.

"I'm a double varsity in badminton and soccer but I think I love karting more, plus my dad said badminton is a good cross-training for karting because it builds up my stamina," revealed the son of badminton patron Albee Benitez.

He also represents Xavier School in soccer, a sport he also loves so dearly that he almost paid a hefty price for it three years ago, when he fractured his left wrist in a game.

"Somehow, you realize that you can get hurt in any sport you got into," Benitez observed.

Especially in karting.

Last weekend, Benitez won the first two of the three-race leg in Carmona Circuit. In the final race, he was in the lead, trying to pile up minutes over the opposition when his rear wheel clipped that of another open junior driver.

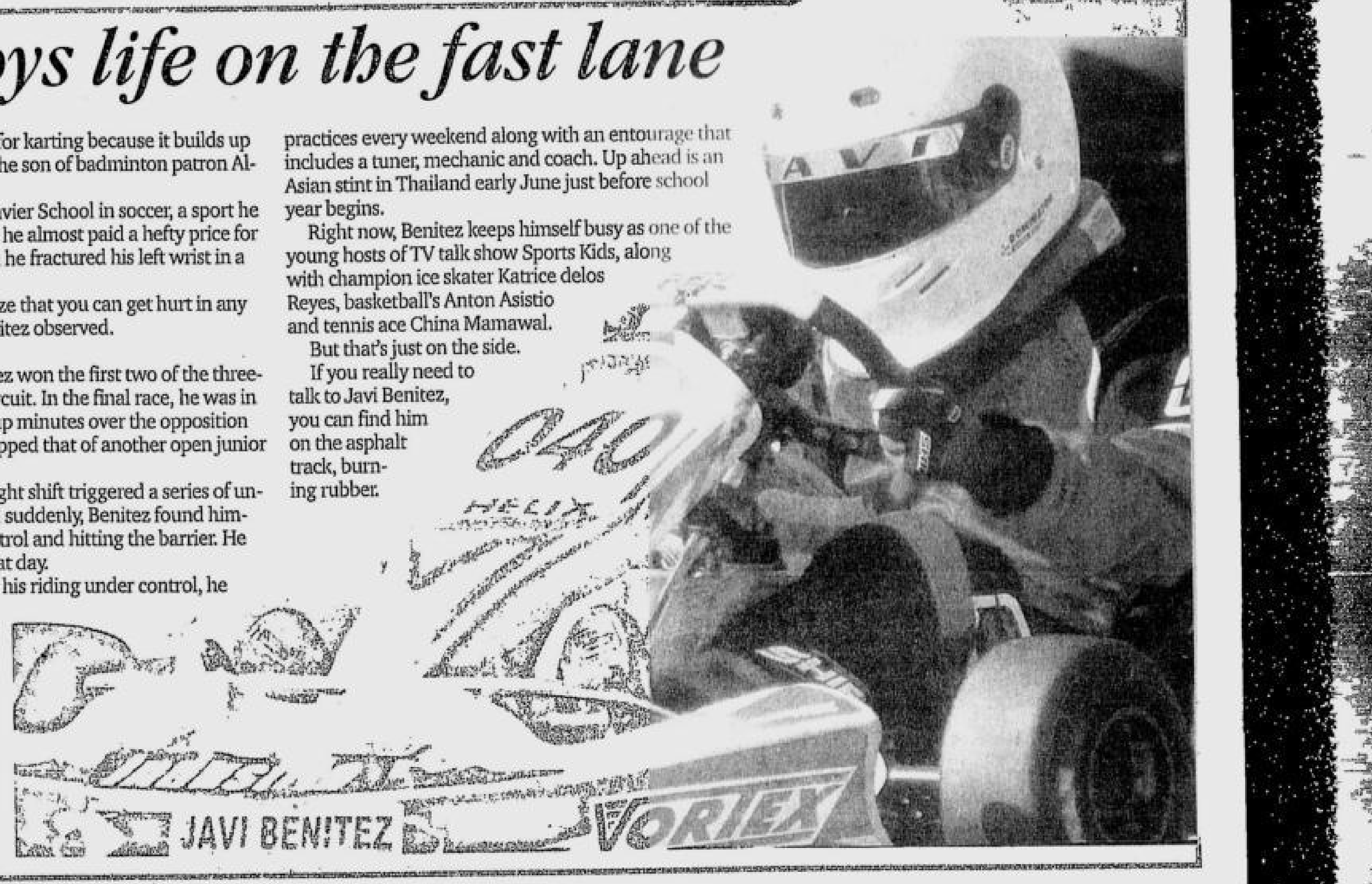
At full speed, that slight shift triggered a series of unfortunate reactions and suddenly, Benitez found himself spinning out of control and hitting the barrier. He finished fifth overall that day.

To make sure he has his riding under control, he practices every weekend along with an entourage that includes a tuner, mechanic and coach. Up ahead is an Asian stint in Thailand early June just before school year begins.

Right now, Benitez keeps himself busy as one of the young hosts of TV talk show Sports Kids, along with champion ice skater Katrice delos Reyes, basketball's Anton Asistio and tennis ace China Mamawal.

But that's just on the side.

If you really need to talk to Javi Benitez, you can find him on the asphalt track, burning rubber.



**DESPITE being just 12, Javi Benitez already knows how it feels to push the pedal to the metal. Benitez is one of the country's top karters today.**

# La Salle, UST banner Shakey's volley field

DEFENDING CHAMPION DE LA SALLE University and reigning UAAP titlist University of Sto. Tomas banner the 4th Shakey's V-League, the country's premiere women's volleyball tournament which fires off May 17 at The Arena in San Juan.

UST topped the inaugural year while DLSU won the succeeding editions.

Other participating teams in the event backed by Mikasa and Accel are NCAA powerhouse San Sebastian College, many-time WNCAA winner Lyceum, Letran, Adamson University, Far Eastern University and Ateneo de Manila.

Simple opening rites will kick off the first conference of the league, highlighted by a tribute for the late former Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) commissioner and organizing Sports Vision Management Group, Inc. (SVMGI) president Emilio "Jun" Bernardino, who spearheaded efforts to revive volleyball.

"It is but fitting to honor Jun B. We will keep his legacy and continue with what he has started," said Sports Vision chair Moying Martelino.

Event organizers have tapped NBN-4 as the event's official network with games to be telecast Monday to Saturday from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

## CLARK AIRFIELD EYED

# POC wants athletes' dorm far from city distractions

**By June Navarro**

**ATHLETES ARE BOUND TO IMPROVE their craft housed in a distraction-free training center far from the hustle and bustle of the big city.**

Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco stressed this yesterday, noting the POC plan to build an athletes' dormitory in Clark Airfield government is more ideal than the decision to construct a hotel-type billeting for athletes in Manila.

POC spokesperson Joey Romasanta said the Olympic body would ask the Philippine Sports Commission to reconsider shelving the proposed athletes' dormitory inside the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

"It's the PSC's call but they might consider locating it somewhere in a place where there are no distractions," said Romasanta.

Cojuangco, who is running as Tarlac governor, already had exploratory talks with several foreign construction firms to build a training complex inside the sprawling former US airbase that will include a state-of-the-art athletes' dormitory.

"It will take off as soon as he (Cojuangco) gets elected," said Romasanta.

COJUANGCO

Situated in Bamban, Tarlac, the proposed national training center inside Clark will also have a housing project for the families of the national athletes.

Meanwhile, PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez said the dormitory would be erected on an 800 square-meter lot adjacent to the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

It would cost around P70 million.

Critics of the the PSC proposal say athletes staying at the RMSC many not be able to concentrate on their training with shopping malls and othr distractions nearby.

However, the government will not spend a single centavo for the construction of the dormitory since the Federation of Philippine-American Chamber of Commerce based in Los Angeles has already committed to foot the bill.

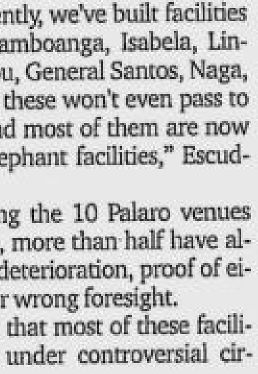
The proposed four-to-five-storey dormitory, which could house at least 500 athletes, will also have a swimming pool, multi-purpose hall, conference room, a cafeteria and other amenities found in a three-star hotel.

# Chiz laments sorry state of sports venues

SENATORIAL ASPIRANT FRANCIS "CHIZ" Escudero batted for a "true home" for national athletes, noting the sorry state of training venues and facilities.

"Limited funding for sports should be spent wisely," Escudero said in a statement E-mailed to media offices, noting that athletic facilities are often built for one-time use only.

Escudero also batted for the construction of a "true home" for athletes to replace the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, which was built starting in 1926.



ESCUDERO

The RMSC hosted the 1981, 1991 and 2005 Southeast Asian Games and to this day, still provides training venues for some events like athletics, baseball, badminton, swimming and taekwondo.

Escudero said the Philippine Sports Commission, Philippine Olympic Committee, and national sports associations (NSAs) should "build a goal in achieving this. We should all support this endeavor."

"Our main sports venue is now among, if not the oldest, in Asia. Recently, we've built facilities in Pampanga, Iloilo, Zamboanga, Isabela, Lingayen, Pangasinan, Cebu, General Santos, Naga, Bacolod and so on, but these won't even pass to host the SEA Games and most of them are now considered as white elephant facilities," Escudero said.

He noted that among the 10 Palaro venues built in the last decade, more than half have already showed signs of deterioration, proof of either mismanagement or wrong foresight.

Escudero also noted that most of these facilities were constructed under controversial circumstances.

"There were accusations of graft and corruption in almost every facility that we built. And soon after, proofs of these allegations show when track ovals bubble or when buildings show cracks. And then these facilities are no longer used," Escudero said.

## SPORTSWATCH

### LSGH basketball camp starts May 11

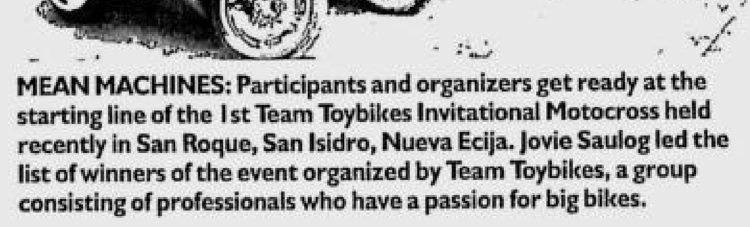
THE THIRD MODULE OF THE LA SALLE GREEN HILLS SUMMER BASKETBALL camp starts on May 11. Courses offered include Advance, Guard Play and Post Play which are designed for kids 12 years and above. Non-Lasallians are welcome to join. Sessions will be held at the FMAC in La Salle Green Hills on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays (except on opening day),1-3:30 pm. Registration fee is P2,300 inclusive of a reversible jersey. Call 7212000 loc 718 or 7227717 for details.

### Rambulan resumes today at SJC

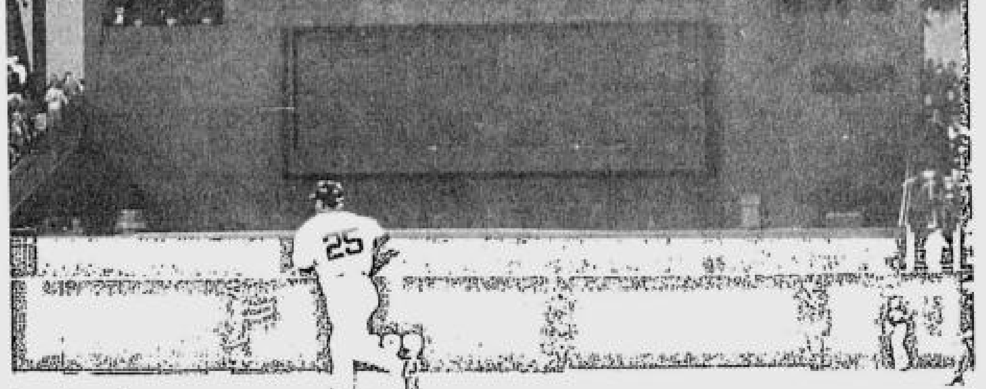
THE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND OF THE NATIONAL RAMBULAN 8-COCK DERBY, an inter-cockpit event that attracted a record 978 entries, resumes today at San Juan Coliseum. Based on the latest standings, 27 participants have remained unbeaten with five wins each and the champion/s will most probably come from this batch. Among the pacesetters are Raymond Velayo, *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio, Dondon Magno, Boy Palban and Sammy Uy of Davao, Rudy Albano and Edwin Abella of Isabela, Muroy Dolorico of Iloilo, Vince Perea, Alan Tan, Dennis Pineda, Louie Cua, Sam Mendoza, Emitte San Juan, Rene Ongpin, Rio Salceda, Boy de Roca, Kabu Taniguchi, Boy Marzo, Enjie Caya, Rep.Nonoy Libanan, Mayor Rano Gesite, Henry Coronel and Mayor Conrado Nicart. The winners, who stand to recieve a combined guaranteed prize of P10.5 million, will be declared after the final round on Saturday. For info: 725-5369 and 725-6563 or 0917-8041691 (Maricar).

### Fastest Win event at Las Pinas

COCKFIGHT ENTHUSIASTS OF MUNTINLUPA, PARANAQUE, PASAY, LAS PIÑAS, Laguna and Cavite clash today at Las Piñas Coliseum via the Fastest Win One-Cock Timbangan beginning at noon. The fastest win champion will be known after every ten fights and shall receive P10,000, while second and third placer gets P5,000 and P3,000 respectively, said coliseum manager Alex Tobias. To be hosted by the Super Joan group, the event requires an entry fee of P1,100. Another 3-cock derby, to be hosted by Romy Millo, unfurls on Saturday with P300,000 at stake and entry fee of P5,500. Two entries—Kidlat of Fisca Garcia and Queen Ira of Romy Ira—topped the 3-cock derby on May 5. For info, contact 873-1040; 874-3910 and 0926-745 0375.



**MEAN MACHINES: Participants and organizers get ready at the starting line of the 1st Team Toybikes Invitational Motocross held recently in San Roque, San Isidro, Nueva Ecija. Jovie Saulog led the list of winners of the event organized by Team Toybikes, a group consisting of professionals who have a passion for big bikes.**



**HOMING IN ON HISTORY: San Francisco Giants Barry Bonds runs the bases after hitting a solo home run in the fourth inning against the New York Mets. The home run was career No. 745, putting Bonds 11 short of Hank Aaron's all-time record. The Mets, however, defeated the Giants, 4-1.** REUTERS

# San Beda, Far Eastern hammer Filoil foes

**By Marc Anthony Reyes**

SAN BEDA AND FAR EASTERN University fashioned out similar impressive victories yesterday and kept their respective opponents from booking an outright quarterfinal slot in the Filoil-Flying V Preseason Invitational Cup at The Arena in San Juan.

The Red Lions, reigning champions of the NCAA, displayed the energy they sorely lack last week by routing Mapua, 71-57.

In scoring its second win in the tournament and first since absorbing a loss to La Salle last Sunday, San Beda banked heavily on Gabby Lanete, Yousif Aljama and last year's NCAA Rookie-MVP awardee Sam Ekwe.

San Beda made its intention very clear at the onset, pulling away to a 23-5 advantage in the first quarter.

That proved too much for the Cardinals to overcome as they absorbed their first loss in three games.

In the first game, Far Eastern University debuted in a big way, drubbing Letran, 91-77. But more than sending across a stern message to the competition, the Tamaraws also gifted new coach Glen Capacio his maiden victory as head coach.

Letran missed an early quarterfinal ticket and dropped to a 1-1 record.

**The scores:**

**First Game**

**FEU 91**—Baracael 22, Adolfo 15, Barroca 13, Cawaling 13, Fernandez 8, Sanga 6, Cervantes 4, Guerilla 4, Ramos 2, Knuttel 2, Cabagnot 1, Abaring 1, Reyes 0.

**LETRAN 77**—Jazul 20, Faundo 18, Guevarra 10, Daa 6, Melegrito 5, Dangcal 5, Quinday 4, Gutiban 4, Latonio 2, Cabonce 2, Raneses 1.

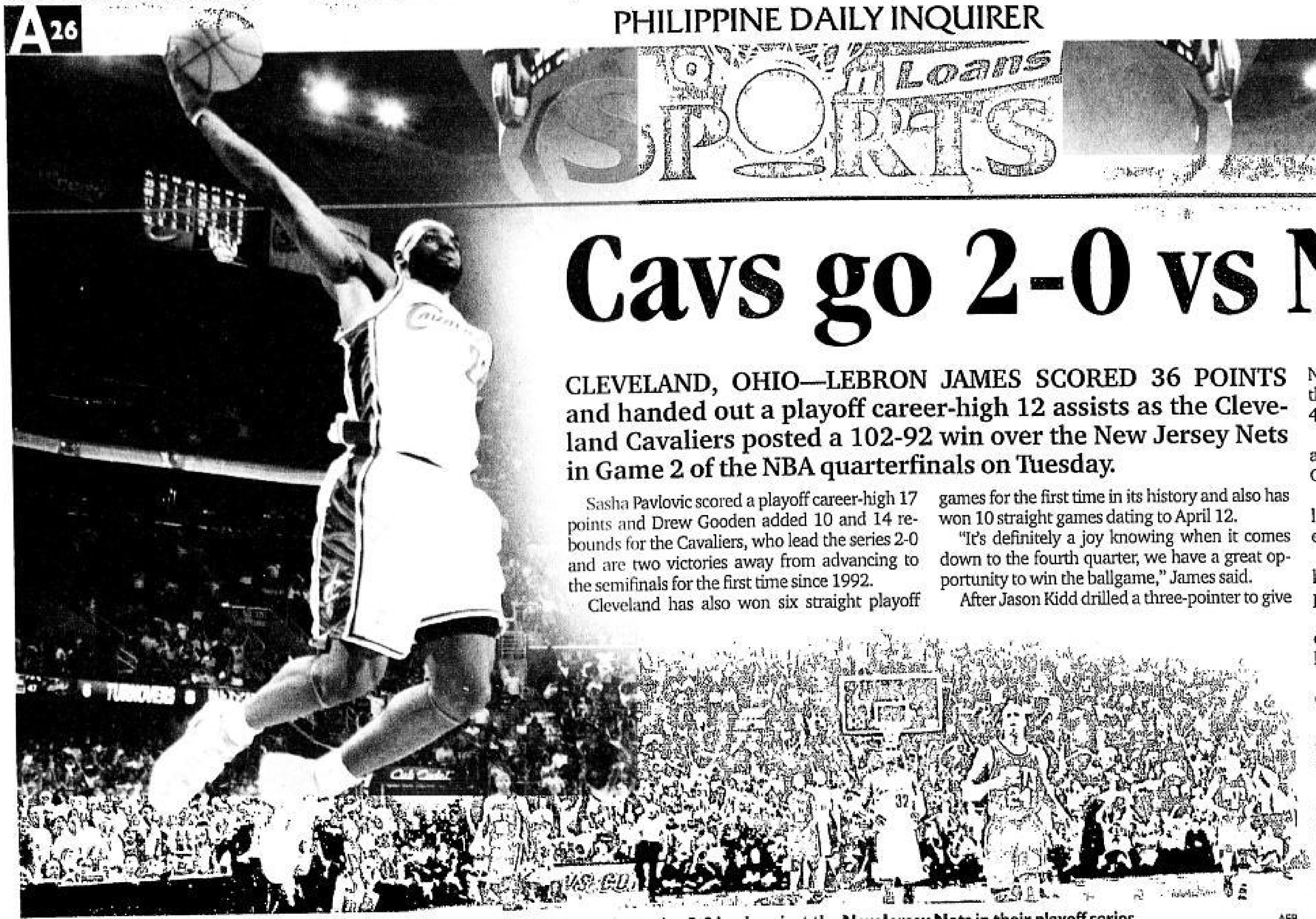
**Quarters:** 18-26, 33-38, 57-57, 91-77

**Second Game**

**SAN BEDA 71**—Lanete 17, Aljamal 14, Menor 13, Ekwe 10, Escobal 5, Hermida 4, Maggay 3, Tecson 3, Galinato 2, Marcelo 0, Tirona 0, Caram 0, Taganas 0.

**MAPUA 57**—Dela Peña 19, Co 9, Pascual N. 8, Mazo 7, Del Rosario 6, Banal 4, Guillermo 3, Acosta 0, Cinco 0, Pascual J. 0, Sumalinog 0.

**Quarters:** 23-5, 41-21, 55-36, 71-57



# Cavs go 2-0 vs NJ Nets

**CLEVELAND, OHIO—LEBRON JAMES SCORED 36 POINTS and handed out a playoff career-high 12 assists as the Cleveland Cavaliers posted a 102-92 win over the New Jersey Nets in Game 2 of the NBA quarterfinals on Tuesday.**

Sasha Pavlovic scored a playoff career-high 17 points and Drew Gooden added 10 and 14 rebounds for the Cavaliers, who lead the series 2-0 and are two victories away from advancing to the semifinals for the first time since 1992.

Cleveland has also won six straight playoff games for the first time in its history and also has won 10 straight games dating to April 12.

"It's definitely a joy knowing when it comes down to the fourth quarter, we have a great opportunity to win the ballgame," James said.

After Jason Kidd drilled a three-pointer to give New Jersey a 81-78 lead with 8:37 remaining, the Cavaliers went on a 13-4 run over the next 4:13, capped by a dunk by Gooden.

James started the burst with a three-pointer and finished it with a quick pass in the lane to Gooden for the slam and a 91-85 lead.

Vince Carter made a 17-foot jumper with 2:40 left to cut the deficit to 93-89, but the Cavaliers ended the contest by outscoring New Jersey, 9-3.

James became just the second player in NBA history to begin his playoff career with 20-plus points in his first 20 playoff games.

Hall of Famer Kareem Abdul-Jabbar had 27 consecutive games of at least 20 points to begin his postseason career.

It's the second time in franchise history the Cavaliers have taken a 2-0 lead in a series.

The previous time also was against New Jersey—in 1992—before winning the best-of-five series in four games.

"We just used the momentum from winning our last four games of the regular season, clinching the No. 2 seed, to take the streak to here," Gooden said.

Carter had his second consecutive poor shooting game for the Nets, scoring 26 points on just 10-of-26 from the field. The eight-time All-Star shot seven-of-23 in Game 1.

Larry Hughes scored 12 points and grabbed seven rebounds and reserve Anderson Varejao grabbed nine boards, including six offensive rebounds for Cleveland, which shot 45 percent (38-of-85) and crushed New Jersey on the glass, 49-32.

Looking to rebound after a poor offensive showing in game one, the Nets raced to a 28-24 lead at the end of the first quarter.

Kidd, Richard Jefferson and Mikki Moore each made three baskets as New Jersey shot 61 percent in the period.

The 28 points were the most either team had scored in the first five quarters of this series.

Jefferson scored 22 points and Moore added 15 for New Jersey, which has never won a playoff series when trailing 2-0.

Kidd scored 17 points, hauled in 10 rebounds and dished out eight assists but also had eight turnovers for the Nets, who shot 52 percent (34-of-65). *AFP*

**LEBRON James goes for a breakaway dunk to lead the Cleveland Cavaliers, who took a 2-0 lead against the New Jersey Nets in their playoff series.** AFP

# Stitched-up Nash helps Suns even playoff series

PHOENIX, ARIZONA—STEVE NASH, PLAYING with a half dozen stitches in his nose, had 20 points and 16 assists as Phoenix rallied from a series opening loss to post a 101-81 win over San Antonio Tuesday.

Raja Bell added 18 points for Phoenix, which opened each period with decisive runs to set the tone for the game en route to its largest margin of victory in a playoff game in franchise history.

"We kept the pace up," said Nash, who wore a bandage to protect the stitches. "In the first quarter the tempo was not in our favor and we were missing shots. But we knew that if we could start making some shots then that would give us momentum."

Phoenix suffered a 111-106 defeat in Sunday's opener of the second round National Basketball Association series. The key moment came with 2:53 remaining, when Nash and Spurs guard Tony Parker, of France, collided.

Parker stayed on the floor for a moment and ended up with a bump on his forehead.

Nash had a gash across the bridge of his nose that didn't initially prevent him from playing but would not stop bleeding despite treatment at nearly every break in the game.

But on Tuesday, Nash put on a virtuoso performance, setting up his teammates for easy shots and igniting Phoenix's patented fast break.

"It might not have looked like our pace at times but it was," he said.

Nash was also inspired by a visit from National Hockey League legend and fellow Canadian Wayne Gretzky, who attended the game with his wife Janet.

"I can't explain how fortunate I've been in my career," Nash said. "My hero when I was growing up, Wayne Gretzky, came to watch me play and that is something I can't put into words. It is so wonderful."

Thanks to the generosity from the two-time NBA MVP Nash, newly minted starter Kurt Thomas scored 12 points on six-of-seven shooting from the field.

Thomas' main duties were to put a big body on Spurs superstar Tim Duncan, who collected 29 points and 11 rebounds and shot 12-of-20 from the field. *AFP*

**NASH** REUTERS

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# Bidding for 54-ha Iloilo property fails

## Developers say P1.2-B price tag too high

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT declared a failed bidding for the 54-hectare old Iloilo airport after major property developers submitted bids that fell short of the floor price set by privatization officials.

The government announced before the opening of the bid envelopes that the floor price was P1.2 billion. Keeping the floor price until the bid date was a strategy to encourage bidders to offer prices that they think were appropriate for the property, a Department of Finance (DOF) official in charge of privatization said.

Of the five companies that were pre-qualified to bid, only three came to the bidding. These were Empire East Properties Inc., Robinson's Land Corp. and SM Prime Holdings. The other two pre-qualified bidders but who backed out were Rockwell Land Corp. and Ayala Land Inc.

Representatives from the bidders gave a common comment that the government's bid price was too high. "The price they set was a little bit too high for the property," said Ron Tumao, SM Prime business development officer.

Robinsons gave the submitted highest bid price of P1.09 billion. It was followed by Empire East, which offered P701 million. SM submitted a bid price of P435.79 million.

"We are disappointed that the bidding failed, but what happened today showed that there is interest for the property and that

BIDDING/ B4

## IN THIS ISSUE

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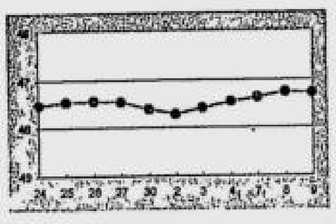
**Breaktime:** Tough secret /B2

**Gov't projecting** P58.72B in excise tax collection from oil, 'sin' products /B4

## INDICATORS

### CURRENCIES



APRIL MAY

**PESO-DOLLAR RATE**

P 47.29 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., May 9, 2007

Y 119.82 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., May 9, 2007

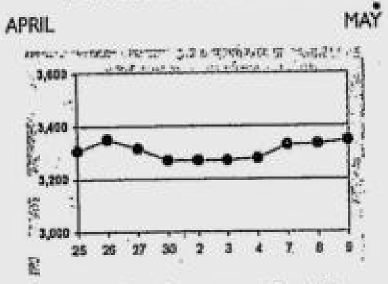
GOLD: $687.50-688.00

per ounce Hong Kong, May 8, 2007

### STOCK MARKET

**PSE COMPOSITE INDEX**

APRIL MAY



(See stock market report on Page B3)

### Shares close higher

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.36-percent higher yesterday, supported by last-minute buying in blue-chips, dealers said.

Strong interest in property firm Ayala Land ahead of its first-quarter results also buoyed sentiment, helping the market reverse early losses, they said, adding that investors remained cautious ahead of elections next week.

The composite index added 12.03 points at 3,345.98, after trading between 3,319.71 and 3,349.98. The broader all-share index gained 8.63 points to 2,129.67.

Losers led gainers 59 to 52, with 56 stocks unchanged.

Turnover was 4 billion shares worth P3.48 billion.

"The market consolidated in early trading but it finally found support at the 3,325 level," said Rommel Macapagal of Westlink Global Equities.

"Trading was rather volatile. The market was not sure where it was headed and coming so close to the elections on Monday, most investors were reluctant to take aggressive positions," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities.

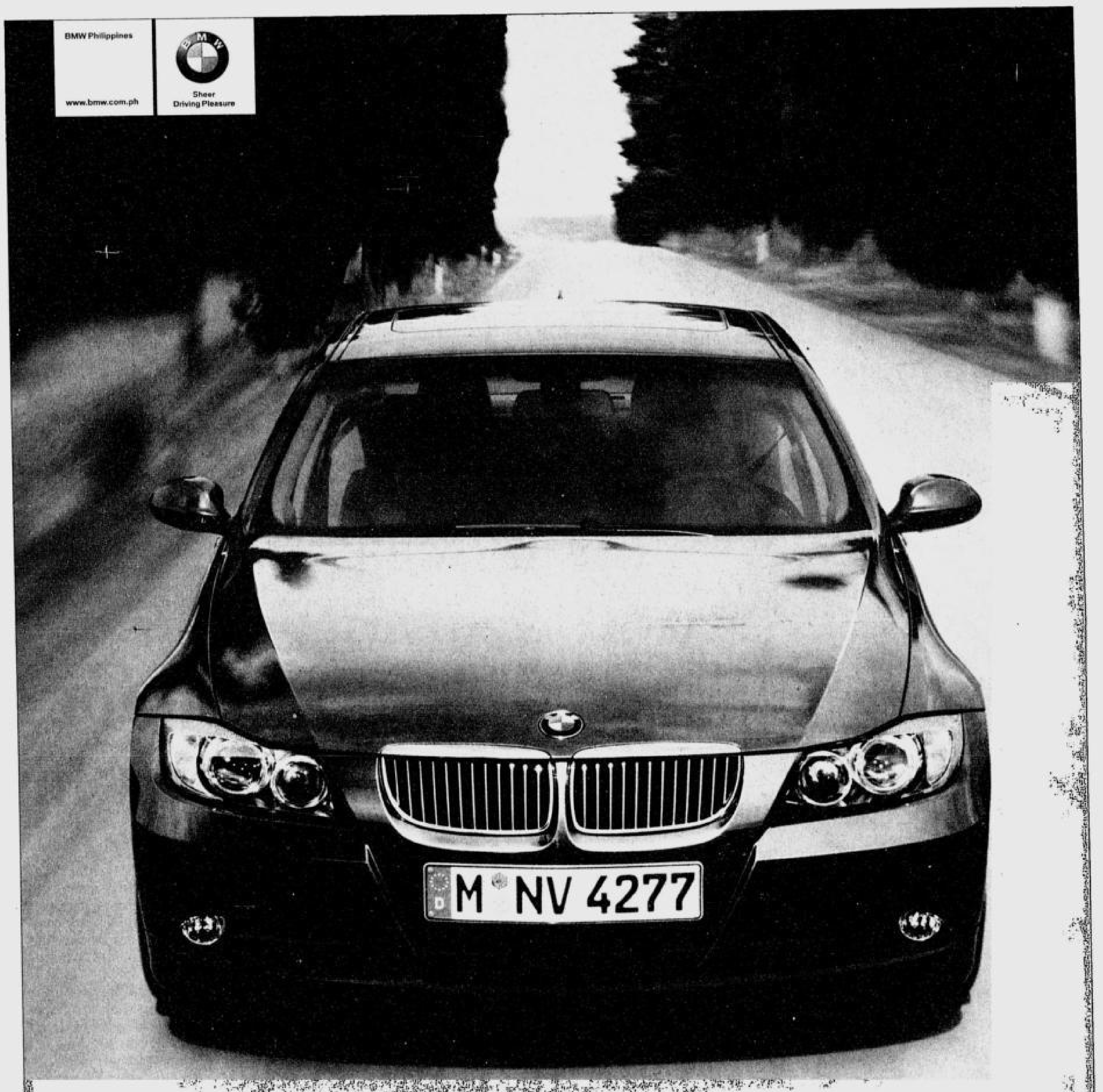
Half of the 24-seat Senate, all of the 236-member Congress and more than 18,000 local government posts are up for grabs in Monday's polls.

Top-traded Globe Telecom gained P80 to close at P1,370 and rival Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. was up P5 to P2,555.

Ayala Land rose 25 centavos to P18.50 while parent Ayala Corp. edged up P5 to P600.

Food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp.'s A- and B-shares rose a peso to P65.50 and P76.

*AFP*



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UNIONBANK

NOTICE OF
CASH DIVIDEND DECLARATION

May 8, 2007

For All Stockholders,

Please be informed that at the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of UnionBank of the Philippines ("UBP") on May 4, 2007, the Board approved the declaration of **cash dividend of P1.60 per share** for all shareholders of the Bank as of record date to be set after receipt of the Bangko Sentral's approval of the cash dividend.

The cash dividend shall be payable from the available retained earnings of the Bank as of December 31, 2006.

Record and payment dates shall be set upon receipt of confirmation/approval by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and clearances from Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE).

For your information. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) **ATTY. FE B. MACALINO**
Corporate Secretary

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Iloilo City

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# Tough secret

**BREAKTIME**

*Conrado R. Banal III*

ONE ROTTEN SECRET OF THE Department of Finance is out!

In her previous job as president of a bank, the well-travelled Evangeline Escobillo, head of the Insurance Commission, which is under the DOF, did an Enron!

All along, the DOF has kept it a top secret, even to Gloriaetta, who hurriedly appointed Escobillo in the heat of the "Hello, Garci" scandal.

The bank is Anchor Savings Bank, with resources of only P800 million, owned by the religious group Knights of Columbus Fraternal Association of the Philippines.

Escobillo was Anchor Bank's president from 1996 to 2005, or from the time the bank opened until she resigned, purportedly to head the Insurance Commission.

It seems that, during those years under Escobillo, the bank allegedly padded its income by more than P100 million.

It turned out that the bank has allegedly fabricated some 38 loan accounts, plus the sale of a P10-million piece of property in Cagayan de Oro, and the liquidation ROPOAs.

In effect, because of those "fake" deals, the bank also recorded fictitious interest income, thereby entitling Escobillo to performance bonuses and profit sharing.

The bank claimed that, due to the overstated income, Escobillo got some P6.5 million in bonuses and such from the bank.

Senior officers of the bank also swore that the income padding was Escobillo's idea all along, saying she had told them that it was good for the bank and its stockholders.

When the bank's board members, all respected leaders of the Knights of Columbus, discovered the padding, they asked for Escobillo's explanation.

She has yet to clear up the mess with the Anchor Savings Bank board. In effect, she told the board, "tough!" Well, she was busy!

Meantime, Escobillo sued the bank, asking for a P10-million retirement pay.

She filed the case in July 2006.

The bank already asked for Escobillo's "cooperation" in clearing up the mess way back in November 2005.

Escobillo gad denied that she had a hand in such an Enron-like modus operandi at Anchor Savings Bank.

But it is an established fact that the foolishness happened during her time as its president.

Now, is she saying that she was not on top of the bank as its president?

Even the Bangko Sentral already recognized the "overstated income." The BSP told the bank to reduce its capital to reflect the "fake" income in the past.

But then again, the BSP was sleeping on the job.

In all those years, the BSP did not discover the padding.

Nobody knows if its auditors were blind!

And what about the external auditors? Where were they?

The Land Bank and the DBP, both government banks, also got hold of the alleged anomaly.

DBP scrapped Anchor Savings Bank from its list of conduits. Land Bank closed its credit line to the thrift bank.

And they all kept quiet—the DOF, the BSP, the DBP, and Land Bank. What do you think—nobody wanted to catch the ire of somebody in DOF? Poor Gloriaetta!

All right, Anchor Savings Bank is still solvent, and its net worth is about P200 million. Still, the Knights of Columbus wants to get rid of it, even sell it at a bargain.

Here is my beef: Escobillo, as head of the Insurance Commission, takes part in the meetings of the Anti-money Laundering Council. Oh, no!

* * *

NOT so long ago, the generous Star Paper, which has been cornering the supply of security paper to the BSP, gave the Department of Foreign Affairs a couple of laminating machines—FOR FREE!

As I have been saying, Star Paper is the local agent of Arjo Wiggins, which has been cornering the supply of laminates for our passports for more than 10 years now.

The thing is, Arjo Wiggins also buys the laminates from somebody else—a firm called Fasver.

What the generous Star Paper forget to tell us about the new FREE laminators was that, well, they would only necessitate an increase in passport fee.

That, of course, means more profit for Star Paper and Arjo Wiggins.

And how much, pray tell, does the Bangko Sentral pay for all the security paper it buys from Star Paper and/or Arjo Wiggins?

That, according to the BSP, is highly confidential! I see.

But is confidentiality also the reason why, while the design of our passport, which the BSP produces at its security printing plant in Quezon City, has changed substantially in the past 10 years, the laminate specification has stayed basically the same?

And what could be the godforsaken reason why, in all these years, no other laminate supplier aside from Star Paper-Arjo Wiggins could prequalify in a competitive bidding?

I know—it's highly confidential!

* * *

DURING the recent ACI Philippines (Forex Association) convention, somebody asked if this cute administration really needed its senatorial slate to win in these elections, for instance, to get its program through the policy-making Senate.

Well, even if candidates from the opposition win, they are always ripe for this cute administration's picking. That is nothing new in our brand of politics. Everybody can switch sides faster than First Gentleman Mike Arroyo can withdraw those libel cases.

Look, they are still fighting in the opposition. The camp of the man named Band … Wrist Band, has always been at odds with Sen. Serge Osmeña. Opposition bets Sen. Manny Villar and former Senator Loren Legarda are campaigning on their own, apparently because both are eyeing something else in 2010. Rep. Francis Escudero has sidelined Sen. Francis Pangilinan, the ally of Rep. Noynoy Aquino, in favor of independent bet former Senator Gregorio Honasan, who is in the sample ballots of Escudero in his home region of Bicol. Rep. Allan Cayetano and Sen. Panfilo Lacson are endorsing senatorial bets who are not in the GO slate.

The "opposition" wing of the Liberal Party headed by Sen. Franklin Drilon wants to be the dominant minority party, to which the United Opposition of Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay is against.

# Masinloc attracts 14 new investors

**By Abigail L. Ho**

COMPANIES FROM NORTH AMERICA, United Kingdom and Europe were among the 20 investors that have expressed interest in bidding for the 600-megawatt Masinloc coal-fired power plant on July 26, according to the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

PSALM president Jose Ibazeta said in a briefing that the 20 investors showed up during last Tuesday's pre-bid conference of which 14 have never participated in previous attempts to privatize the major power plant.

Ibazeta said he did not expect 20 companies to vie for ownership of the Masinloc plant, however, as some of them were expected to merge into consortia to enable them to make stronger bids.

"I'm hoping to get at least six to seven serious bidders," Ibazeta said.

PSALM will issue within the week a supplemental bid bulletin to announce the release of transaction documents for the Masinloc sale, which will contain the asset purchase and land-lease agreements for the power facility.

Ibazeta declined to say how much Masinloc was worth, saying the value should increase depending on the power supply deals to be attached to the bidding.

These supply contracts will assure the winning bidders of a ready market for the power that Masinloc will generate.

He said PSALM was targeting to have at least half of the Masinloc plant's capacity covered by supply deals.

Ibazeta said the matter of the supply contracts would be discussed with prospective bidders on May 22, the next pre-bid conference for the plant.

"We already have indications (of how much capacity the supply contracts will cover), but we do not want to preempt it as we're still negotiating that with Napocor. The 25-percent proposal of Napocor can still be increased, depending on market forces," he said.

"We will look at what Napocor can attach, but we want to make it higher. The higher the better—anything higher than the proposal, or at least 50 percent. But it's still difficult to pin down a figure, as it doesn't seem that Napocor can give that much," he added.

# Bring microfinance to small farmers, Yap urges council

**By Amy R. Remo**

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY ARTHUR C. YAP has urged members of the Agricultural Credit Policy Council to bring microfinance closer to small farmers.

Yap, in his short message during the 20th anniversary of ACPC yesterday, directed officers of the agency to take part in the department's mission to help provide capital to expand the agriculture and fishery sectors.

"We should get the money down to the farmers," said Yap, who also chairs the ACPC. The agriculture sector grew 3.55 percent in the first quarter of the year, with the fisheries sector posting the biggest growth of 8.52 percent during the same period.

The ACPC has already released some P34 billion worth of loans, which have benefited about 1.6 million farmers and fisherfolk all over the country.

ACPC has recently commissioned studies on financing schemes suited to the needs of borrowers engaged in the production of priority agricultural and fisheries commodities.

One study entitled "Profiling and Estimation of the Credit Demand of Small Farmers and Fisherfolk," estimates the demand for credit in the major commodity groups, such as rice, corn, coconut, sugarcane, fisheries and livestock.

Credit and finance is part of DA's five-point program, which seeks to boost farmers' income and reduce poverty.

DA, through this program, will strengthen the micro and SME financing programs under its attached finance institutions, such as the ACPC.

The power of microfinance and training will be brought closer to the farmer and fisherfolk sector to bring about higher production and yields, as well as greater access to markets here and abroad.

ACPC, currently headed by Executive Director Jovita Corpus, was created to map out strategies to address the issue of credit access for small farmers and fisherfolk.

# PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 8, 2007)

| 52-WEEK HIGH | 52-WEEK LOW | STOCKS | OPEN | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE | VOLUME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **BANKS** | | | | | |
| 17.5 | 5 | Asiatrust Development Bank Inc. | 12.25 | 12.5 | 12.25 | 12.25 | 109,000 |
| 73 | 42.5 | Bank of the Philippine Islands | 67 | 67.5 | 65.5 | 66.5 | 1,019,900 |
| 65.5 | 30.5 | Banco de Oro Universal Bank | 60 | 60 | 59.5 | 59.5 | 1,335,300 |
| 935 | 630 | China Banking Corp. | 900 | 900 | 890 | 890 | 1,590 |
| 20 | 18.18 | Citystate Savings Bank | 19.75 | 19.75 | 19.75 | 19.75 | 300 |
| 119 | 60 | Equitable PCI Bank Inc. | 104 | 104 | 103 | 103 | 137,000 |
| 0.63 | 0.36 | Export and Industry Bank Inc | 0.54 | 0.54 | 0.53 | 0.53 | 2,480,000 |
| 68.5 | 29 | Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. | 61 | 61.5 | 61 | 61.5 | 2,519,700 |
| 55 | 30.5 | Philippine National Bank | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 1,500 |
| 68 | 30.5 | Philippine Savings Bank | 63 | 64 | 63 | 64 | 1,000 |
| 39.57 | 13.04 | Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. | 28.5 | 29 | 28 | 28.5 | 2,211,000 |
| 90 | 41 | Security Bank Corp | 86 | 86 | 85 | 85 | 115,200 |
| | | **OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS** | | | | | |
| 0.85 | 0.6 | Bankard Inc. | 0.66 | 0.66 | 0.66 | 0.66 | 10,000 |
| 7.7 | 1.5 | CitisecOnline.com Inc. | 6.7 | 6.9 | 6.4 | 6.9 | 588,000 |
| 39 | 27 | First Metro Investment Corp. | 37.5 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 10,000 |
| 2,000.00 | 1,500.00 | Manulife Financial Corp. | 1,650.00 | 1,650.00 | 1,650.00 | 1,650.00 | 500 |
| 5 | 4.15 | National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils. | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.35 | 4.45 | 18,830,000 |
| 2.4 | 0.97 | PCI Leasing and Finance Inc. | 2.24 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 1,443,000 |
| 1,005.00 | 200 | The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc | 570 | 570 | 555 | 555 | 4,680 |
| 2,250.00 | 1,895.00 | Sun Life Financial Inc. | 2,120.00 | 2,120.00 | 2,120.00 | 2,120.00 | 260 |
| 1.94 | 1.02 | Vantage Corp. | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.88 | 1.88 | 2,458,000 |
| | | **ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER** | | | | | |
| 0.37 | 0.16 | East Asia Power Resources Corp. | 0.29 | 0.29 | 0.29 | 0.29 | 300,000 |
| 62.5 | 41 | First Gen Corp. | 59 | 59 | 58.5 | 58.5 | 452,000 |
| 82.5 | 40.5 | First Phil. Holdings Corp. | 75 | 75.5 | 74.5 | 75 | 178,400 |
| 12.75 | 6.6 | Manila Water Co. Inc. | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 917,200 |
| 81 | 13 | Manila Electric Co. "A" | 78.5 | 78.5 | 77 | 77 | 306,900 |
| 82 | 20.25 | Manila Electric Co. "B" | 79 | 79 | 77 | 78.5 | 1,144,700 |
| 6.8 | 4.1 | PNOC Energy Development Corp. | 5.9 | 5.9 | 5.8 | 5.9 | 7,204,000 |
| 5.7 | 3.35 | Petron Corp. | 5.2 | 5.2 | 5.1 | 5.2 | 1,085,000 |
| 1.62 | 0.89 | Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp. | 1.42 | 1.44 | 1.4 | 1.42 | 272,000 |
| | | **FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO** | | | | | |
| 5 | 2.85 | Alaska Milk Corp. | 5 | 5 | 4.85 | 4.85 | 2,633,000 |
| 2.95 | 1.88 | Alliance Tuna International Inc. | 2.18 | 2.18 | 2.14 | 2.14 | 161,000 |
| 3.4 | 1.24 | CADP Group Corp. | 1.84 | 1.84 | 1.84 | 1.84 | 14,000 |
| 28.5 | 19.5 | Ginebra San Miguel Inc. | 26 | 26.5 | 25 | 26.5 | 52,200 |
| 61 | 30 | Jollibee Foods Corp. | 54 | 54 | 54 | 54 | 711,300 |
| 1.62 | 0.69 | RFM Corp. | 1.38 | 1.38 | 1.38 | 1.38 | 20,000 |
| 4.05 | 2.34 | Roxas Holdings | 2.48 | 2.48 | 2.46 | 2.46 | 40,000 |
| 67.5 | 61 | San Miguel Corp. "A" | 64.5 | 65.5 | 64.5 | 65.5 | 298,000 |
| 84 | 68 | San Miguel Corp. "B" | 74 | 76 | 74 | 76 | 414,300 |
| 4.3 | 2 | Tanduay Holdings Inc. | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 10,000 |
| 24 | 15.75 | Universal Robina Corp. | 16.25 | 16.25 | 16 | 16.25 | 2,181,200 |
| | | **CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES** | | | | | |
| 5.17 | 1.07 | EEI Corp. | 4.7 | 4.85 | 4.7 | 4.85 | 1,725,000 |
| 9.2 | 4.2 | Holcim Philippines Inc. | 9.1 | 9.2 | 9 | 9 | 2,034,000 |
| 7.5 | 2.04 | Philippine National Const. Corp. | 5.8 | 6.1 | 5.8 | 6.1 | 80,000 |
| 7 | 1.1 | Republic Cement Corp | 5.8 | 5.9 | 5.8 | 5.9 | 302,000 |
| 2 | 0.245 | Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc. | 1.74 | 1.82 | 1.74 | 1.82 | 1,660,000 |
| | | **CHEMICALS** | | | | | |
| 6.3 | 1.42 | Chemrez Technologies Inc. | 6.1 | 6.3 | 6.1 | 6.2 | 2,991,000 |
| 0.82 | 0.5 | Mabuhay Vinyl Corp. | 0.66 | 0.66 | 0.65 | 0.66 | 20,000 |
| 0.95 | 0.185 | Metro Alliance Hold'gs and Eqts. "A" | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 100,000 |
| | | **DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS** | | | | | |
| 0.43 | 0.06 | Picop Resources Inc. | 0.27 | 0.27 | 0.26 | 0.27 | 10,390,000 |
| | | **HOLDING FIRMS** | | | | | |
| 4.05 | 1.7 | A. Soriano Corp. | 3.75 | 3.75 | 3.75 | 3.75 | 450,000 |
| 0.0925 | 0.022 | AJO.net Holdings Inc. | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.0675 | 0.0675 | 15,500,000 |
| 0.59 | 0.17 | APC Group Inc. | 0.56 | 0.57 | 0.55 | 0.55 | 26,310,000 |
| 0.018 | 0.006 | Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A" | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.012 | 3,000,000 |
| 9.7 | 4.85 | Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc. | 8.9 | 8.9 | 8.7 | 8.8 | 4,084,000 |
| 0.016 | 0.0065 | Alcorn Gold Resources Corp. | 0.013 | 0.014 | 0.013 | 0.013 | 54,200,000 |
| 7.3 | 3.5 | Alliance Global Group Inc. | 6.6 | 6.6 | 6.4 | 6.5 | 1,878,000 |
| 1.04 | 0.45 | Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc. | 0.78 | 0.83 | 0.78 | 0.83 | 90,000 |
| 2.24 | 0.83 | Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp. | 2.18 | 2.22 | 2.16 | 2.22 | 14,839,000 |
| 680 | 327.5 | Ayala Corp. | 595 | 600 | 590 | 600 | 199,770 |
| 14 | 7.92 | Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc. | 13.5 | 13.5 | 13.5 | 13.5 | 7,800 |
| 6.9 | 0.7 | Balabac Resources and Holdings Co. Inc. | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.65 | 4.7 | 81,000 |
| 4.45 | 0.97 | Benpres Holdings Corp. | 3.85 | 3.95 | 3.75 | 3.75 | 18,529,000 |
| 8.4 | 3.25 | DMCI Holdings Inc. | 8.3 | 8.4 | 8.1 | 8.4 | 5,309,000 |
| 1.3 | 0.7 | F and J Prince Holdings Corp. "A" | 1.04 | 1.04 | 1.04 | 1.04 | 20,000 |
| 6 | 2.55 | Filinvest Development Corp. | 5.3 | 5.3 | 5.3 | 5.3 | 25,000 |
| 0.42 | 0.13 | Forum Pacific Inc. | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 120,000 |
| 3.55 | 1.14 | House of Investments Inc. | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 146,000 |
| 14.5 | 5.3 | JG Summit Holdings Inc. | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 235,000 |
| 0.43 | 0.185 | Medco Holdings Inc. | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0.33 | 100,000 |
| 0.88 | 0.1 | Mabuhay Holdings Corp. | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 120,000 |
| 12.5 | 0.88 | Magnum Holdings Inc. | 11.5 | 11.75 | 11 | 11.25 | 542,800 |
| 3.95 | 0.19 | Multitech Investments Corp. | 3.8 | 3.95 | 3.65 | 3.9 | 6,056,000 |
| 1.26 | 0.8 | Prime Media Holdings Inc. | 0.97 | 0.97 | 0.97 | 0.97 | 20,000 |
| 0.48 | 0.155 | Prime Orion Philippines Inc. | 0.43 | 0.43 | 0.42 | 0.43 | 2,830,000 |
| 407.5 | 205 | SM Investments Corp. | 370 | 372.5 | 370 | 372.5 | 221,740 |
| 0.51 | 0.115 | Sinophil Corp. | 0.37 | 0.37 | 0.35 | 0.35 | 11,010,000 |
| 0.85 | 0.51 | Solid Group Inc. | 0.73 | 0.73 | 0.73 | 0.73 | 130,000 |
| 1.34 | 0.68 | South China Resources Inc. | 1.22 | 1.32 | 1.22 | 1.32 | 1,104,000 |
| 0.41 | 0.05 | Uniol Resources and Holdings Co. Inc. | 0.29 | 0.29 | 0.29 | 0.29 | 1,000,000 |
| 0.24 | 0.08 | Wellex Industries Inc. | 0.17 | 0.17 | 0.165 | 0.165 | 80,000 |
| 0.55 | 0.15 | Zeus Holdings Inc. | 0.39 | 0.39 | 0.37 | 0.38 | 180,000 |
| | | **PROPERTY** | | | | | |
| 2.16 | 0.75 | A Brown Co. Inc. | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 400,000 |
| 0.58 | 0.3 | Araneta Properties Inc. | 0.46 | 0.46 | 0.46 | 0.46 | 50,000 |
| 18.75 | 10.25 | Ayala Land Inc. | 18.25 | 18.75 | 18.25 | 18.5 | 16,633,100 |
| 1.72 | 0.95 | Belle Corp. | 1.32 | 1.34 | 1.3 | 1.32 | 6,631,000 |
| 3.1 | 1.18 | C and P Homes Inc. | 2.55 | 2.55 | 2.42 | 2.48 | 146,000 |
| 4.5 | 1.8 | Cebu Holdings Inc. | 4.3 | 4.45 | 4.3 | 4.45 | 2,596,000 |
| 2.1 | 1 | Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp. "B" | 1.7 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 360,000 |
| 0.54 | 0.24 | Crown Equities Inc. | 0.46 | 0.46 | 0.46 | 0.46 | 100,000 |
| 0.54 | 0.165 | Cyber Bay Corp. | 0.51 | 0.51 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 4,240,000 |
| 3.1 | 0.64 | Edsa Properties Holdings Inc. | 2.85 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.85 | 421,000 |
| 0.99 | 0.44 | Empire East Land Holdings Inc. | 0.79 | 0.79 | 0.78 | 0.78 | 2,290,000 |
| 0.165 | 0.027 | Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc. | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 2,810,000 |
| 1.12 | 0.38 | Fil-Estate Land Inc. | 0.76 | 0.77 | 0.76 | 0.77 | 1,510,000 |
| 2.04 | 0.93 | Filinvest Land Inc. | 1.76 | 1.76 | 1.7 | 1.72 | 21,546,000 |
| 0.33 | 0.05 | Gotesco Land Inc. "A" | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 150,000 |
| 3.35 | 2.04 | Highlands Prime Inc. | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 150,000 |
| 0.016 | 0.0038 | Interport Resources Corp. "A" | 0.011 | 0.011 | 0.011 | 0.011 | 2,000,000 |
| 0.69 | 0.2 | Kuok Phil. Properties Inc. | 0.45 | 0.45 | 0.43 | 0.45 | 4,550,000 |
| 0.99 | 0.18 | MRC Allied Industries Inc. | 0.77 | 0.81 | 0.76 | 0.76 | 7,730,000 |
| 0.034 | 0.011 | Marsteel Consolidated Inc. "A" | 0.024 | 0.024 | 0.021 | 0.022 | 5,400,000 |
| 3.95 | 1.26 | Megaworld Corp. | 3.45 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 34,042,000 |
| 6.4 | 1.5 | Metro Pacific Investments Corp. | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.35 | 4.4 | 82,000 |
| 0.26 | 0.1 | Phil. Estates Corp. | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 200,000 |
| 0.87 | 0.25 | Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp. | 0.59 | 0.6 | 0.58 | 0.59 | 3,440,000 |
| 23 | 9.6 | Robinson Land Corp. | 17.75 | 18.25 | 17.75 | 18.25 | 558,700 |
| 6 | 1.48 | SM Development Corp. | 5.9 | 6 | 5.8 | 5.9 | 2,642,000 |
| 13 | 6.9 | SM Prime Holdings Inc. | 11.75 | 12 | 11.5 | 12 | 2,390,500 |
| 0.27 | 0.06 | Uniwide Holdings Inc. | 0.19 | 0.2 | 0.19 | 0.195 | 3,190,000 |
| 1.74 | 0.3 | Zipporah Realty Holdings Inc. | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.18 | 1.2 | 5,940,000 |
| | | **MEDIA** | | | | | |
| 30.5 | 13.5 | ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. | 30.5 | 30.5 | 30 | 30.5 | 320,800 |
| 1.2 | 0.97 | Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp. | 1.04 | 1.04 | 1.04 | 1.04 | 4,000 |
| | | **TELECOMMUNICATIONS** | | | | | |
| 2.12 | 1.1 | Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc. | 1.68 | 1.7 | 1.68 | 1.7 | 1,178,000 |
| 1,445.00 | 820 | Globe Telecom Inc. | 1,295.00 | 1,370.00 | 1,295.00 | 1,370.00 | 361,880 |
| 2,820.00 | 1,700.00 | Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co. | 2,550.00 | 2,555.00 | 2,540.00 | 2,555.00 | 174,040 |
| 7.9 | 3.1 | Pilipino Telephone Corp. | 6.9 | 6.9 | 6.7 | 6.8 | 2,560,000 |
| | | **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** | | | | | |
| 0.39 | 0.155 | Boulevard Holdings Inc. | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 940,000 |
| 8.3 | 2 | Diversified Financial Network Inc. | 8 | 8.3 | 8 | 8.3 | 1,593,000 |
| 7.6 | 2 | IPVG Corp. | 7 | 7 | 6.8 | 6.8 | 1,283,000 |
| 0.075 | 0.046 | ISM Communications Corp. | 0.06 | 0.0625 | 0.06 | 0.0625 | 3,200,000 |
| 2.9 | 1.38 | Ionics Inc. | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 130,000 |
| 1.84 | 1.1 | Music Semiconductors Corp. | 1.44 | 1.44 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 616,000 |
| 0.06 | 0.025 | PhilWeb.Com Inc. | 0.046 | 0.046 | 0.045 | 0.046 | 78,800,000 |
| 5.8 | 1 | Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc. | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 15,000 |
| | | **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** | | | | | |
| 1.88 | 1.14 | Aboitiz Transport System Corp. | 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 216,000 |
| 6.8 | 2.5 | Asian Terminals Inc. | 6.4 | 6.5 | 6.4 | 6.5 | 573,000 |
| 32 | 12.5 | Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc. | 27 | 27.5 | 27 | 27.5 | 831,700 |
| 2.14 | 0.86 | Keppel Philippines Marine Inc. | 2 | 2.04 | 2 | 2.02 | 886,000 |
| 1.74 | 0.8 | Lorenzo Shipping Corp. | 1.2 | 1.26 | 1.2 | 1.26 | 100,000 |
| | | **HOTEL & LEISURE** | | | | | |
| 4.25 | 1.26 | Leisure and Resorts World Corp. | 4 | 4.05 | 4 | 4.05 | 4,691,000 |
| 4 | 2.7 | Manila Jockey Club Inc. | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 244,000 |
| 4.2 | 2.8 | Philippine Racing Club Inc. | 3.05 | 3.05 | 3.05 | 3.05 | 131,000 |
| 0.45 | 0.18 | Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc. | 0.38 | 0.38 | 0.38 | 0.38 | 1,220,000 |
| 1.2 | 0.42 | Waterfront Philippines Inc. | 0.99 | 0.99 | 0.97 | 0.97 | 3,030,000 |
| | | **EDUCATION** | | | | | |
| 966.67 | 650 | Far Eastern University Inc. | 800 | 800 | 650 | 650 | 87,510 |
| 3.7 | 2.65 | IPeople Inc. | 3.15 | 3.15 | 3.15 | 3.15 | 50,000 |
| | | **DIVERSIFIED SERVICES** | | | | | |
| 22 | 6.6 | JTH Davies Holdings Inc. | 8.3 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 5,000 |
| 4.35 | 1.84 | Macroasia Corp. | 3.9 | 4 | 3.9 | 3.95 | 1,087,000 |
| 16 | 13 | Pacific Online Systems Corp. | 14.25 | 14.25 | 14 | 14.25 | 428,400 |
| 30 | 9.5 | Paxys Inc. | 27.5 | 27.5 | 27 | 27 | 463,400 |
| 50 | 22 | Prime Gaming Philippines Inc. | 32 | 32 | 32 | 32 | 200 |
| | | **MINING** | | | | | |
| 0.018 | 0.007 | Abra Mining and Industrial Corp. | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.012 | 311,200,000 |
| 7.6 | 2.6 | Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A" | 6.2 | 6.5 | 6.2 | 6.4 | 3,333,000 |
| 7.7 | 2.55 | Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B" | 6.4 | 6.6 | 6.3 | 6.6 | 2,660,000 |
| 19.75 | 5.6 | Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp. | 18.5 | 19.75 | 18.5 | 19.5 | 10,490,100 |
| 14.75 | 8.7 | Benguet Corp. "A" | 12.25 | 12.25 | 12.25 | 12.25 | 200 |
| 2.12 | 0.0602 | Geograce Resources Philippines Inc. | 2.06 | 2.1 | 2.04 | 2.06 | 34,733,000 |
| 0.42 | 0.215 | Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A" | 0.3 | 0.31 | 0.3 | 0.31 | 29,450,000 |
| 0.47 | 0.225 | Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B" | 0.34 | 0.35 | 0.33 | 0.35 | 16,550,000 |
| 0.037 | 0.0154 | Manila Mining Corp. "A" | 0.034 | 0.036 | 0.034 | 0.036 | 833,900,000 |
| 0.039 | 0.017 | Manila Mining Corp. "B" | 0.036 | 0.038 | 0.036 | 0.037 | 238,400,000 |
| 0.024 | 0.0075 | Omico Corp. | 0.019 | 0.02 | 0.019 | 0.019 | 300,200,000 |
| 5.9 | 2.65 | Philex Mining Corp. | 5.2 | 5.3 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 3,649,000 |
| 32 | 14.75 | Semirara Mining Corp. | 28 | 28.5 | 28 | 28 | 120,200 |
| 0.87 | 0.25 | United Paragon Mining Corp. | 0.76 | 0.78 | 0.76 | 0.78 | 680,000 |
| 1.8 | 0.41 | Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp. | 1.38 | 1.4 | 1.38 | 1.4 | 6,454,000 |
| | | **OIL** | | | | | |
| 0.58 | 0.23 | Basic Consolidated Inc. | 0.38 | 0.38 | 0.37 | 0.37 | 10,570,000 |
| 0.017 | 0.008 | Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A" | 0.016 | 0.017 | 0.016 | 0.016 | 8,200,000 |
| 0.019 | 0.009 | Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B" | 0.018 | 0.018 | 0.018 | 0.018 | 77,000,000 |
| 25.5 | 1.5 | PNOC Exploration Corp. "B" | 23 | 23 | 23 | 23 | 600 |
| 14.81 | 8.27 | Petroenergy Resources Corp. | 10.25 | 10.25 | 10 | 10.25 | 78,000 |
| 0.0182 | 0.0089 | The Philodrill Corp. | 0.016 | 0.017 | 0.016 | 0.016 | 1,650,000,000 |

COMPILED BY INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK

# CURRENCIES

| May 9, 2007<br>Country | Unit | Euro Equivalent | Dollar Equivalent | Peso Equivalent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | Dollar | 0.738116 | 1.000000 | 47.3250 |
| Japan | Yen | 0.006155 | 0.008339 | 0.3946 |
| United Kingdom | Pound | 1.468704 | 1.989800 | 94.1673 |
| Hong Kong | Dollar | 0.094410 | 0.127907 | 6.0532 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 0.605957 | 0.820951 | 38.8515 |
| Canada | Dollar | 0.668160 | 0.905223 | 42.8397 |
| Singapore | Dollar | 0.486628 | 0.659283 | 31.2006 |
| Australia | Dollar | 0.610619 | 0.827267 | 39.1504 |
| Bahrain | Dinar* | 1.957972 | 2.652661 | 125.5372 |
| Saudi Arabia | Rial | 0.196820 | 0.266652 | 12.6193 |
| Brunei | Dollar | 0.485029 | 0.657117 | 31.0981 |
| Indonesia | Rupiah | 0.000083 | 0.000113 | 0.0053 |
| Thailand | Baht | 0.022747 | 0.030817 | 1.4584 |
| UAE | Dirham | 0.200963 | 0.272264 | 12.8849 |
| Euro | Euro | 1.000000 | 1.354800 | 64.1159 |
| Korea | Won | 0.000800 | 0.001084 | 0.0513 |
| China | Yuan** | 0.095909 | 0.129938 | 6.1493 |
| Argentina | Peso | 0.239648 | 0.324675 | 15.3652 |
| Brazil | Real | 0.364736 | 0.494144 | 23.3854 |
| Denmark | Kroner | 0.134184 | 0.181792 | 8.6033 |
| India | Rupee | 0.018162 | 0.024606 | 1.1645 |
| Malaysia | Ringgit | 0.216711 | 0.293600 | 13.8946 |
| Mexico | New Peso | 0.068095 | 0.092255 | 4.3660 |
| New Zealand | Dollar | 0.543933 | 0.736920 | 34.8747 |
| Norway | Kroner | 0.122981 | 0.166614 | 7.8850 |
| Pakistan | Rupee | 0.012184 | 0.016507 | 0.7812 |
| South Africa | Rand | 0.106490 | 0.144273 | 6.8277 |
| Sweden | Kroner | 0.108818 | 0.147427 | 6.9770 |
| Syria | Pound | 0.014219 | 0.019264 | 0.9117 |
| Taiwan | Nt Dollar | 0.022198 | 0.030074 | 1.4233 |
| Venezuela | Bolivar | 0.000344 | 0.000466 | 0.0221 |

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—May 8, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.

** Asian time closing rate as of May 8, 2007

# Ayala Land posts 10% jump in Q1 net profit

**By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson**

REAL-ESTATE GIANT AYALA LAND Inc. (ALI) said its net income in the first quarter grew 10.2 percent to P1.29 billion from P1.17 billion in the same period last year on higher revenues from residential projects.

ALI's consolidated revenues in the first quarter reached P6.45 billion, 18-percent higher than the P5.46 billion posted in the same period last year, it said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) yesterday.

Residential development accounted for the biggest share of total revenues at 46 percent or P2.9 billion. ALI's hotels, construction and property management accounted for 16 percent or P1 billion of total revenues. Shopping centers contributed 15 percent or P978 million while corporate business generated 4 percent or P232 million.

Meantime, total operating revenues grew by 11 percent to P5.28 billion as growth across all residential brands more than offset the decline in hotel revenues following the sale of Oakwood Premier Ayala Center and lower corporate business revenues due to the full sell-out of Laguna Technopark and the sale of the PeopleSupport building late last year.

Complementing operating revenue growth were higher equity earnings from the company's investment in Bonifacio Global City due to strong lot sales.

Revenues from residential development grew 25 percent to P2.9 billion from P2.3 billion reported during the same period in 2006. Ayala Land Premier (ALP) and Community Innovations Inc. (CII) reported double-digit growths.

ALP projects generated P1.5 billion in revenues, 29-percent higher than the year-ago figure, driven by high-end condominium unit sales. High-end units contributed P1 billion, with 110 of the 158 booked units coming from the three towers of The Residences at Greenbelt.

CII's revenues increased 35 percent year-on-year to P850 million. A total of 166 units were booked during the period, 11 percent more than last year, with Two Serendra at the Global City in Fort Bonifacio accounting for 71 units and The Columns at Legazpi Village for 53 units.

Avida, ALI's affordable housing arm, reported revenues of P556 million, only 4 percent more than P534 million a year. Booked units dropped 12 percent year-on-year to 456 units.

# SMC unit to launch Cavite project

SAN MIGUEL PROPERTIES INC., THE real-estate developer and leasing arm of conglomerate San Miguel Corp., is launching this month a new phase of its residential project dubbed "Maravilla" in General Trias, Cavite.

Cost of developing the the new phase, which will offer lots and house-and-lot packages, is estimated at P500 million.

Alan Cruz, SMPI head of real-estate development, said yesterday that the project would feature Mediterranean-type houses that would be sold at P1.8-P2 million each unit with a floor area of 72 square meters.

SMPI first started with its 20-hectare Maravilla project in 1998.

SMPI is primarily engaged in the development, sale or lease of property. On Dec. 9, 2002, the company merged with another subsidiary, HOC Realty Inc..

Among the company's subsidiaries are Legacy Homes Inc. and Excel Unified Land Resources Corp. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

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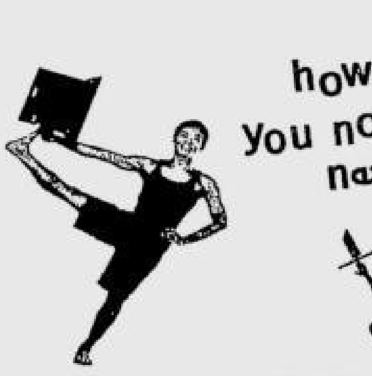
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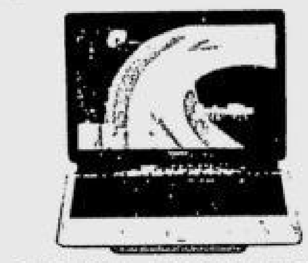

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# Holcim Q1 profit up by 173%

HOLCIM PHILIPPINES INC. YESterday said it expected this year to be more profitable than last year as it reported a first-quarter revenue growth of 18.95 percent to P4.15 billion and 173.3-percent profit increase to P475.9 million.

During the firm's stockholders' meeting yesterday, HPI chief operating officer Ian S. Thackwray said Holcim's positive outlook for 2007 was due to the anticipated rise in demand.

"(Demand) growth may now be here because of the growth in the residential building sector fueled by remittances from overseas and low interest rates," Thackwray said. He said the increase in cement sales was also being driven by the government's financing of low-cost housing projects, which he said was expected to expand due to an improving fiscal position.

HPI earlier said revenue in 2006 slid 3.3-percent decline to P13.68 billion, although net income for the year went up by about 22.1 percent to P1.55 billion.

"Despite the challenges last year of decreased demand and the shut down of one of our kilns in Davao, your company showed a solid performance," Thackwray told HPI stockholders. He added, however, that profitability in 2006 fell short of a respectable rate of return on investments. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

# Gov't projecting ₱58.72B in excise tax collection from oil, 'sin' products

**INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR TRAVELERS**
Cebu Pacific vice president for passenger sales Edwin Bautista (left), Malayan Insurance chair Adelita Vergel de Dios (center) and Malayan president Yvonne S. Yuchengco (right) seal the newly formed partnership between the airline and the insurance firm with a toast. The two companies teamed up to offer a comprehensive personal accident and emergency medical treatment insurance coverage to passengers traveling anywhere in the Philippines and in Asia.

## No substantial increase from last year's level

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT EXPECTS to generate P58.72 billion in revenue this year from the imposition of excise taxes on oil and 'sin' products such as cigarettes and alcoholic beverages.

The excise tax collection goal for 2007, which was deemed consistent with the goal to further trim the budget deficit, was slightly higher (0.89 percent) than the P58.2 billion recorded last year.

Finance officials said the government could not expect a significant increase in the revenue from the excise tax because of the rate cut on oil products provided for by the VAT Reform (VAT) Law. The rate reduction was aimed at offsetting the impact on the consumers' purchasing power of the increase in the value-added rate from 10 to 12 percent.

Republic Act No. 9337 expanded the coverage of VAT to include oil and electricity in November 2005 and raised the VAT rate in February 2006.

According to the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the foregone revenue due to the VAT reform measures was higher than the additional revenue from the implementation of the Sin Tax Law.

The Sin Tax Law, which took effect in January 2005, mandated the increase in sin taxes on cigarettes and alcohol every two years until 2011.

Revenue officials said the excise tax collection could not increase substantially because many cigarette and alcohol manufacturers 'frontloaded' their production in December last year to avoid paying the higher excise tax rates which took effect last January.

The excise tax is imposed once the products are released from the manufacturing plants. Some manufacturers, the BIR said, advanced their production and stored their output in warehouses so they could pay the old excise tax rates.

With the aid of certain administrative measures, the government said the revenue from excise taxes could increase to P60.85 billion.

Data from the BIR showed that to achieve the full-year excise tax collection target, the agency had to raise P13.09 billion in the first quarter; P13.33 billion in the second quarter; P15.59 billion in the third quarter; and P16.71 billion in the last three months.

# Anchor Land to raise ₱700M through IPO

By Daxim L. Lucas

PROPERTY DEVELOPER Anchor Land Holdings Inc. plans to raise as much as P700 million from its initial public offering (IPO), which it hopes to undertake by the third quarter of this year.

In an interview, Anchor Land president Steve Li said the company would use the proceeds from the cash raising exercise to increase its land bank and fund existing projects.

"We are looking at acquiring additional properties in Manila," he said as the company unveiled its latest residential project aimed at high-end buyers from the Chinese-Filipino community in the Binondo area.

"We have filed for an IPO [with the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Philippine Stock Exchange] two days ago," Li said, adding that he was expecting to receive approval in the coming weeks.

Depending on market conditions and investors' reception of the issue, Anchor Land would raise between P400 million and P700 million from the share sale, he said. He did not disclose what percentage of the firm's outstanding stock would be made available to the public although the IPO size indicates that Anchor Land would be one of the smaller property developers on the stock exchange after listing.

Li said the firm—owned by several Chinese-Filipino shareholders which he declined to identify—is focused mainly on developing residential projects in the Manila area. He believes the heart of Manila remains underserved.

# First Gen to spend $1.37B in next 3-5 years

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson
and Abigail L. Ho

LOPEZ-LED FIRST GEN CORP. IS SPENDING $1.37 billion for 'greenfield' or new power generation projects and expansion of existing facilities in the next three to five years in a bid to double production to meet growing demand for power.

First Gen is sitting on a $250 million cash pile which it can readily tap for projects this year, First Gen chief finance officer Francis Giles Puno said.

The company can raise $200-$250 million through loans or peso bond flotation if need arises, Puno added.

However, First Gen officials said the company would focus first on the acquisition of existing plants in the next 18 to 24 months before pursuing new projects.

The company is considering acquiring several National Power Corp. assets, including the 600-megawatt (MW) Masinloc coal-fired power plant in Zambales, the Ambuklao-Binga hydropower package, the Angat hydropower facility, and the Palinpinon and Tiwi-Makban geothermal facilities.

Of the eight Napocor generation assets that Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. has sold so far, three are now owned by First Gen: the 1.6-MW Agusan hydropower plant in Bukidnon and the 112-MW Pantabangan-Masiway hydropower package (composed of two plants).

After 18-24 months, First Gen senior vice president Ricardo Tantoco said the company would be ready to venture into greenfield projects.

In yesterday's stockholders' meeting, First Gen chair Oscar Lopez said the company's experience in the power generation business had given it the confidence to adopt a more aggressive position in acquisitions and in venturing into greenfield projects.

In the meantime, First Gen vice chair Peter Garrucho said that the capital spending target of $1.37 billion would cover the expansion of the Pantabangan-Masiway hydroelectric plants and the construction of coal plants in modules of 100 MW possibly in Panay, which is experiencing power shortages, and in Luzon, which is in need of cheap power and additional supply to avert a possible power shortage by 2010.

Garrucho said First Gen was also hoping to implement a 550-MW San Gabriel natural gas project in Batangas, which has been stalled in the past two years by gas supply issues.

He said said First Gen was also considering mini-hydro projects in Panay and Northern Mindanao.

First Gen has been invited to participate in a combined cycle, gas projects in Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

"We are looking at these as learning modules that will test the mettle of our organization and our people and build the base for future profits," Garrucho said.

"We are rethinking our earlier decision not to bid for the 600-MW Masinloc coal plant. While we cannot predict success of our bids, we are confident that with our technical due diligence efforts and our growing marketing strength, we are best positioned to win such an asset," he said.

The company was one of the prospective bidders represented during the pre-bidding conference for Masinloc last Tuesday.

Also during the stockholders meeting, First Gen reported that its net income in the first quarter grew 36 percent to $34 million from $25 million in the same period last year.

# Canadian firm to raise ₱104M for RP projects

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CANADIAN MINERAL EXPLORation firm Mindoro Resources Ltd. yesterday said it would raise CDN$2.45 million (about P104 million) through the TSX Venture Exchange to help advance its projects in the Philippines.

The announcement came a day after Mindoro Resources released results of its latest drilling activities in the recently confirmed Kay Tanda gold find in Batangas. The results showed the mineral zone in the area was "increased significantly than previous indications." In a statement, the Alberta-based firm said it had arranged to sell up to 3.5 million units to qualified investors at $0.70 per unit through Canada's bourse that caters to emerging companies. "Each unit will consist of one common share and one-half common share purchase warrant," the firm explained.

"Each whole warrant entitles the holder to acquire one additional common share at $1 for one year after the close of the offering."

If the purchase of the additional share would be made after the following year from closing, the price would be $1.25 each.

Also, Mindoro Resources reported that results from a total of seven holes drilled in Kay Tanda "have extended mineralization further by 350 m (westward) and 150 m (northwest)."

# Bidding for 54-ha ...

From page B1

it can be sold," the DOF official said.

The DOF said it was too early to say whether it would consider lowering its minimum bid price to pursue the privatization, but said the government would hold talks with the bidders to know how they could still maintain their interest in the property.

One option the government could look into is to enhance the quality of the property, such as taking charge of removing informal settlers from the property, the DOF said.

The DOF said the government has the legal flexibility to enter into a negotiated sale, although this has to be discussed by privatization officials. Under a negotiated sale, the government is allowed to sell a property at 10 percent below its floor price.

The DOF said that while the bidding failed, it would not want its privatization to take too long and would still target to sell the property within the year.

The government originally expected to get as much as P2 billion from the sale of the airport. The DOF said the floor price of P1.2 billion was determined by averaging the several market valuation reports that it gathered.

# *Political instability tops concerns of Japanese businessmen in RP*

By Noel Adlai O. Velasco

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL INstability topped the list of concerns of most Japanese businessmen doing business or planning to invest in the Philippines.

This was one of the findings of the 2006 Survey of Japanese Firms' International Operations conducted by the Japan External Trade Organization (Jetro).

The survey covered 729 Japanese firms, of which 177 are doing business in the Philippines.

### Infrastructure problems

Its results showed that 52.5 percent of the Japanese firms operating in the Philippines perceived the country as politically and socially unstable. The same issue also ranked high among the concerns of Japanese businessmen in Indonesia (50.4 percent) and China (41.3 percent).

Other major concerns of these companies in the Philippines are the country's underdeveloped infrastructure (32.2 percent) and lack of accumulation of related industries (20.9 percent), which they regard as critical bottlenecks.

But the risk from undeveloped infrastructure ranked highest among Japanese firms in India (57.2 percent) and in Vietnam (47.9 percent).

Labor cost and the taxation system in the Philippines are the least of these Japanese firms' concerns.

The Jetro survey asked Japanese firms to cite the risks of doing business in major countries in Asia, including the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, India and China.

The risk factors were identified as political and social instability, local currency, infrastructure, legal system and procedure, industrial accumulation, intellectual property rights, labor cost increase and taxation.

### China's legal system

Japanese firms operating in China ranked its underdeveloped legal system and problems with legal procedures (59.9 percent), problems with protection of intellectual property rights (59.2 percent) and tax issues (33.2 percent) as their top concerns.

They are particularly concerned about the reduced rates of refund on the value-added tax for labor-intensive products which China implemented in September 2006 and the move to revise the preferential tax rates on corporate income of foreign-affiliated firms.

In India, Japanese firms are also worried over taxation problems (17.9 percent). They find its taxation system complicated.

Poor or inadequate infrastructure was cited as the biggest risk by Japanese firms doing business in India (57.2 percent), Vietnam (47.9 percent) and the Philippines (32.2 percent).

Indonesia topped the list in the area of local currency concerns (23.5 percent), followed by China (20.5 percent), where the yuan is expected to undergo further revaluation.

### Labor cost not an issue

Increasing labor costs ranked highest among firms doing business in Singapore (39.3 percent), followed by those in China (28.4 percent), in Thailand (20.4 percent) and in Malaysia (13.9 percent).

Japanese firms in India (3.5 percent) and the Philippines (4.0 percent) find these countries to have the least increases in labor costs.

However, despite the lower labor cost in the Philippines, Japanese firms were not keen in relocating their operations to the Philippines. Some firms even plan to pullout of the country, the survey showed.

The survey results also showed that many Japanese firms transferred their production bases in the past three years or plan to transfer in the next three years from Japan to China; from Japan to Thailand, and from China to Vietnam.

Reasons cited for the transfer were "increase in production and labor costs, high risks of placing all functions in the same place and stagnant local sales."

In the case of the Philippines, three out of five respondents cited "stagnant local sales" as their reason for their transfer or plan to transfer their production bases.

But Japanese firms showed greater interest in expanding their businesses in India and Vietnam due to the strong economic growth and expanding markets.

### Expansion in China

China ranked highest in all areas of business expansion such as sales operations and production, followed by Thailand.

The Jetro survey was conducted between November and December last year.

Jetro is a Japanese government-related organization that promotes trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. It gathers commercial intelligence, conducts market research and performs public relations services for Japanese industries worldwide.

Originally established in 1958 to promote Japanese exports abroad, Jetro's focus has shifted toward promoting foreign direct investment into Japan and helping small- and medium-scale Japanese firms maximize their global export potential. It has 73 overseas offices in 55 countries worldwide.

Portions of the survey were presented by Shozo Sakata, a senior research fellow of the Institute of Developing Economies of Jetro, at the Vietnam Economic Forum, entitled "Vietnam: Modernization and Regional Integration," held recently in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The forum was organized by the Vietnam New Agency and the Asia News Network, of which the Philippine Daily Inquirer is a member.

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## NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

| Name and address of Company/Employer | Name of Foreign National | Position |
|---|---|---|
| **TAKENAKA CORP.**<br>18/F Tower 2, Enterprise Center, Ayala Ave. cor. Paseo de Roxas, Makati City | Kanji Kawatani | Mechanical and Electrical Manager |
| **EEP PHONE ENGLISH SYSTEM, INC.**<br>1040 EDSA, Magallanes Village, Makati City | Eunju Kim | Account Officer |
| **EEP PHONE ENGLISH SYSTEM, INC.**<br>1040 EDSA, Magallanes Village, Makati City | Kyubin Park | Account Officer |
| **CHINA NATIONAL TECHNICAL IMPORT AND EXPORT CORPORATION**<br>Unit 901, 9/F West Tower, PSE Centre, Exchange Road, Ortigas Centre, Pasig City | Sen Yuan | Finance Manager |
| **UNION MEDICA PHARMACEUTICAL PHILIPPINES LTD., INC.**<br># 64 Rosal St., Villa Teresa Subd., Marulas, Valenzuela City | Ying Lu | Researcher |
| **BLUE HORIZONS TRAVEL & TOURS, INC.**<br>20/F Trafalgar Plaza, H.V. Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City | Jeremy Mark Adam Kemp | Project Manager |
| **FAMILY MATE TRADING, INC.**<br>G/F Matheus Bldg., Don Pedro St., Poblacion, Makati City | Jungsuk Youn (w/o OH) | Manager |
| **NEW HORIZON INTEGRATED SCHOOL, INC.**<br>Lot I, Ferrer Cmpd., Brgy. Pinagbuhatan, Pasig City | Abrahim M. Magadam | Finance Manager |
| **HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES INC.**<br>Unit 5302, 53/F PBCom Tower, Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St., Salcedo Village, Makati City | Jun Shen | Radio Network Plan Manager |
| **HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES INC.**<br>Unit 5302, 53/F PBCom Tower, Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St., Salcedo Village, Makati City | Xiaoxu He | Technical Support Engineer |
| **HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES INC.**<br>Unit 5302, 53/F PBCom Tower, Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St., Salcedo Village, Makati City | Yanbin Zheng | Technical Support Engineer |
| **HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES INC.**<br>Unit 5302, 53/F PBCom Tower, Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St., Salcedo Village, Makati City | Ruipeng Wang | Manager (Technology Department) |
| **HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES INC.**<br>Unit 5302, 53/F PBCom Tower, Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St., Salcedo Village, Makati City | Rui Ji | TSD Engineer |
| **HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES INC.**<br>Unit 5302, 53/F PBCom Tower, Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St., Salcedo Village, Makati City | Kunjun Chen | Project Manager |
| **PETRONIO CORP.**<br>1839-E Balintawak St., Tondo, Manila | Zehuan Hou | Sales Supervisor |
| **PETRONIO CORP.**<br>1839-E Balintawak St., Tondo, Manila | Chaoyang Hou | Warehouse Manager |
| **KING RICHARD SHOP SYSTEM INC.**<br>4171 Sampaguita St., Sun Valley, Bicutan, Parañaque City | Jing Liu | Assistant Marketing Manager |
| **SABICLUB.COM CORP.**<br>2/F Aguirre Bldg., 108 Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City | Byeong Pil Kim | Project Analyst |
| **SABICLUB.COM CORP.**<br>2/F Aguirre Bldg., 108 Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City | Jin Su Kim | Marketing Officer |

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

**LOURDES M. TRASMONTE**
Regional Director

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(PDI–May 10, 2007)

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# OBITUARIES

## DOMINADOR VALENCIA TRAGICO, SR.

November 4, 1928 - May 4, 2007
Former Dumaguete City Gov't Secretary
City Coordinator, City Personnel Officer

His bereaved wife Ramona Cataylo; children & in-laws Engr. Butch, Jr. & Darvi (Dorado), Poyette & Noel Ramos, Athelstan, Nenet & Ibzan Kadile; grandchildren Engrs. Carlisel & Dexter Maxino, Carli Joy, Jazhiel Ann, Jan Hezron, Jane Jannette; great-grandchild Charles; brothers & sisters Capt. Ramon Tragico, Jr. & Bambi, Capt. Gil Tragico (†) & Darling, Ambrosio & Aldena, Ted Tiu & Flora (†), Polly (†), Purita (†), Cresencio & Virginia.

Funeral Mass will be held on Friday, May 11, 2007, 2 p.m. at Dumaguete Cathedral. Interment will follow at New Bogo Cemetery, Dumaguete City.

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Most Rev. Jose F. Oliveros, D.D.
The CLERGY and Faithful of the Diocese of Malolos
extend their sincerest prayers and condolences
to the relatives and friends of

## REV. FR. VICENTE VASQUEZ

*who peacefully joined his Creator, our Loving Father on May 5, 2007.*

His remains lie in state at the National Shrine of St. Anne in Hagonoy, Bulacan. A funeral Mass will be offered on Saturday, May 12, 2007 at 3:00 p.m. at the Parish Church of the National Shrine of St. Anne, Hagonoy.

*"Living or Dying, Lord Jesus, I would be Yours,*
*Keep me Your own forever,*
*Draw me day by day nearer to You,*
*Until I am wholly filled with Your Love "*

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD

IN RE : PETITION FOR ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY (CPCN) TO OPERATE DOMESTIC NON-SCHEDULED AIR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES (AIR TAXI SERVICES)
CAB Case No. EP-29359-LED0407/065

BEELINE HELICOPTERS, INC.
Petitioner.
x - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - x

### NOTICE OF HEARING

Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 776, as amended, notice is hereby given that **BEELINE HELICOPTERS, INC.** has filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board a petition for issuance of Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) to operate non-scheduled domestic air transportation services (Air Taxi Services). The initial hearing of the above entitled case will be held on **29 May 2007 at 2:00 P.M.** in the CAB Conference Room of the Civil Aeronautics Board, Old MIA Road, Pasay City, before the undersigned Hearing Officer, at which hearing the petitioner shall present evidence

Under Section 16 of R.A. 776, the applicant is hereby required to have this Notice of Hearing published at least once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation and have copies hereof and the application be sent to all Philippine carriers, either by personal service or by registered mail with return card at least five (5) days before the scheduled hearing.

Parties opposed to the granting of the petition must file their written opposition on or bfore the date of the hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the petitioner, and appear at the hearing with such evidence as may be proper under the premises. Failure on the part of any interested party to file its opposition on time and appear at the hearing shall be construed as a waiver of its right to be heard and the Civil Aeronautics Board shall proceed to hear and decide this petition on its merit.

Let a copy of this Notice be posted at the CAB Bulletin Board beginning today.

02 May 2007
Pasay City, Philippines

(Sgd.) MA. ELBEN SL. MORO
Hearing Officer

Copy furnished:

ATTY. DOMINGO G. FORONDA
Counsel for Petitioner
5th Floor, BMG Centre, Paseo de Magallanes, Makati City

ATTY. ROBERTO C.O. LIM
PAL Legal Department
Philippine Airlines, Inc.
9/F, PAL Center, Legaspi St., Legaspi Village, Makati City

ATTY. RAYMUND JAY S. GOMEZ
Counsel for Cebu Pacific
Cebu Air, Inc.
Airline Operations Center APC
Domestic Airport, Pasay

ATTY. JONATHAN ANDREW D. LIM
Legal Department
Air Philippines Corporation
Gate I, Andrews Avenue, Pasay City

MR. REYNALDO L. RODRIGUEZ
Vice President, Commercial Group
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Domestic Airport Road, Pasay City

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Domestic Road, Pasay City

ATTY. ELVIRO PEREZ III
Counsel for SEAIR, Inc.
South East Asian Airline, Inc.
Domestic Road, Pasay City

(PDI – May 10, 2007)

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**BERTHAPHIL, INC.**

**Notice is given that Demand Draft No. 001372 in the amount of US$7,500 under the name of RIVKIN RADLER LLP was lost since February 19, 2007.**

(PDI - May 4-10, 2007)

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**TEAM UNITY** senatorial candidate Luis "Chavit" Singson listens to Archbishop Ernesto A. Salgado of Vigan, Ilocos Sur during the recent 2nd Philippine Olympic Festival Northern/Central Luzon, CAR division, which was hosted by the province. Chavit considers Salgado his spiritual adviser.

---

Republic of the Philippines
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**
Region IX, Zamboanga Peninsula
Normal Road, Baliwasan, Zamboanga City
Tel. No. 991-1907 / Fax No. 991-5975

## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Education, Regional Office IX, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites cooperative (suppliers/manufacturers/contractors/distributors) to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following Project:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Name of Project* | *: Supply and Delivery of CY 2006 School Furniture* |
| *Location* | *: Regional Office IX, Zamboanga City* |
| *Brief Description* | *: Desk (1 table with 2 chairs) with teachers tables and chairs, Secondary Armchairs with teachers tables and chairs* |
| *ABC & Funding Source* | *: P6,092,000.00 / DepED* |
| *Contract Duration* | *: 120 days from the date of acceptance of Notice to Proceed* |

The Bidding shall be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the IRR of RA 9184 and is restricted to cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check in Section II, Instruction to Bidders in the Bidding Documents shall be used.

The prospective bidder must have an experience of having completed within the last five years (reckon from date of bid opening) a single contract that is similar to the contract to be bid, and whose value, adjusted to current prices using the wholesale consumer price index, must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid per package.

The schedule of BAC activities are as follows:

| ACTIVITY | DATE | VENUE |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Issuance of Bid Documents | May 7 to May 15, 2007 | Office of the ARD |
| 2. Pre-Bid Conference | May 16, 2007 at 2:00 pm | Office of the ARD |
| 3. Deadline of Submission of Bids | May 28, 2007 at 1:00 pm | Office of the ARD |
| 4. Opening of Bids | May 28, 2007 | Office of the ARD |

Bid documents will be available only to Prospective Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 3,000.00 to the Cashier, DepEd Regional Office IX, Zamboanga City.

The DepEd Regional Office IX, reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to contract award, without incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Approved by:
(Sgd.) **OHAM A. ATARA**
BAC Chairperson

(PDI–May 7 & 10, 2007)

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**LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES**
1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the projects as stated below:

| Item / Description | Approved Budget | Date/Time | | Non-Refundable Fee |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Pre-Bid Conference | Deadline/ Opening of Bids | |
| 2,340 Pcs. Ribbon, "Original" for IBM 9068-AO1 Passbook Printer, Reorder No. 07K4446, Meas.: 23m x 6.35mm | P1,867,700.00 | May 17, 2007 3:30 PM | May 30, 2007 1:00 PM | P 1,100.00 |
| 990 Pcs. Ribbon Cartridge, "Original" for Olivetti PR2S10 Passbook Printer | 291,700.00 | | | |
| 1,000 Units Personal Computer | P40,000,000.00 | May 17, 2007 10:00 AM | May 30, 2007 1:00 PM | P20,000.00 |

The Bid Documents shall be available at the Procurement Department starting May 10, 2007 upon payment of non-refundable fees indicated above.

The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at Procurement Department Bidding Room, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, 1598 M. H. del Pilar cor. Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila.

Please address your queries to the Head-Secretariat, Bids and Awards Committee, or call 405-7370; 551-0000 locals 2290 & 2293.

LANDBANK reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s).

**BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE**

(PDI--May 10, 2007)

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# OBITUARIES

*"In peace I shall both lie down and sleep, for you alone,*
*Lord, make me secure." Psalm 4:9*

Our Dearly Beloved

## JOSE ENRIQUE M. ROXAS

"Daddy-yo"

*Peacefully joined our Lord*
*on May 6, 2007 at the age of 74.*

His loving wife, **Paching Britanico-Roxas** and seven daughters and sons-in-law, **Petita & Edwin, Maris, Beth, Ayin, Carol & Jun, Ning, Jo & Egay**; grandchildren, **Chia, Pauline, Jake, Ana, Angelo, Paolo, Jed,** and **Gayla** request the pious readers to thank our Lord for his full and meaningful life and pray for the eternal repose of his soul and that Providence light his path.

Interment will be today, May 10, 2007, at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass to be held in Mt. Carmel Chapel in Broadway, New Manila, Quezon City.

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*Whenever we look into the horizon, we look*
*forward to a glimpse of a glorious dawn...*

## NESTOR ARCEGA TORRES

*Peacefully joined the Lord*
*on May 8, 2007 at the age of 70.*

His loving wife, **Felisa**; children **Neil Anthony** and wife **Julieta, Farah Marie, Noel** and **Neil Russel**; and grandson **Neil Julian**, request you to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Sta. Monica Church, Sta. Monica Heights, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.

Interment will be on May 16, 2007 at Puerto Princesa Memorial Park after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

---

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## AGATONA AQUINO REYES

**(Ret. Public School Teacher)**

of

Pagsanjan, Laguna and Sta. Elena Hagonoy, Bulacan
has peacefully joined her Creator on
May 7, 2007 and her husband
**Domingo C. Reyes, Sr.** at the age of 95.

*Children*, **Gody (†) & Norma (†)**
**Liwayway & Ricardo**
**Amor**
**Chita & Efren (†)**
**Domingo Jr. & Resie**
**Doroteo II & Vicky**
**Charito**

*Grandchildren*, **Gaye, Liza, Doy, Dondon, Cora, Rev. Fr. Boyet, Rowena, Ume, Katrina, Ronron, Dondee, Jhan jhan, Mabeth & Jingjing**

*Great Grandchildren*, **Patricia, Gabriel, Patrick, Dana, Leizon, & Leila**

Nephews, Nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at her residence at 133 Sta. Elena, Hagonoy, Bulacan. Interment will be on Saturday, May 12, 2007 at 1:30 p.m. at Sta. Elena Catholic Cemetery.

*We send you off with prayerful goodbyes and gratitude for your life and loving faith that God's angels guide your alight.*

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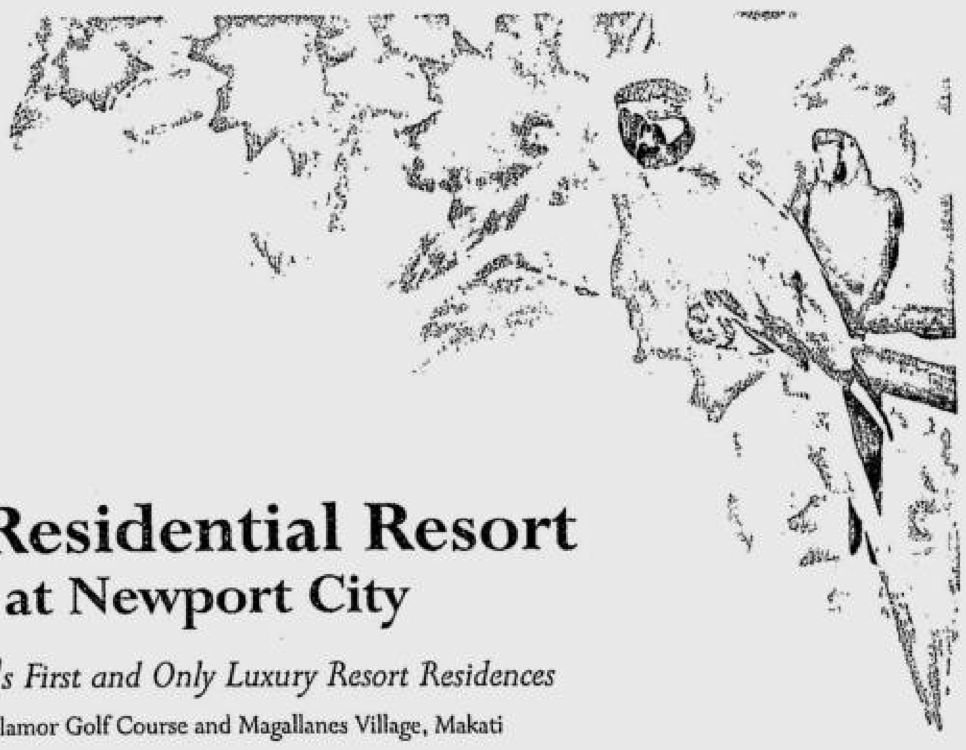

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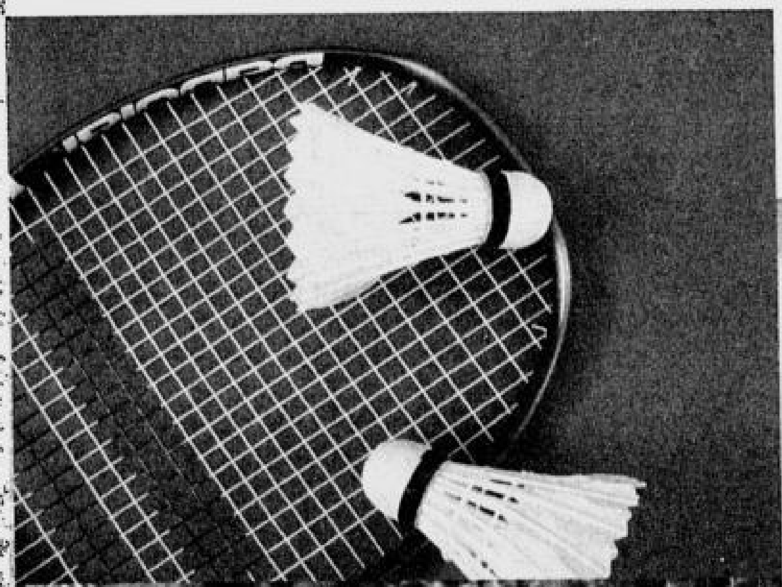
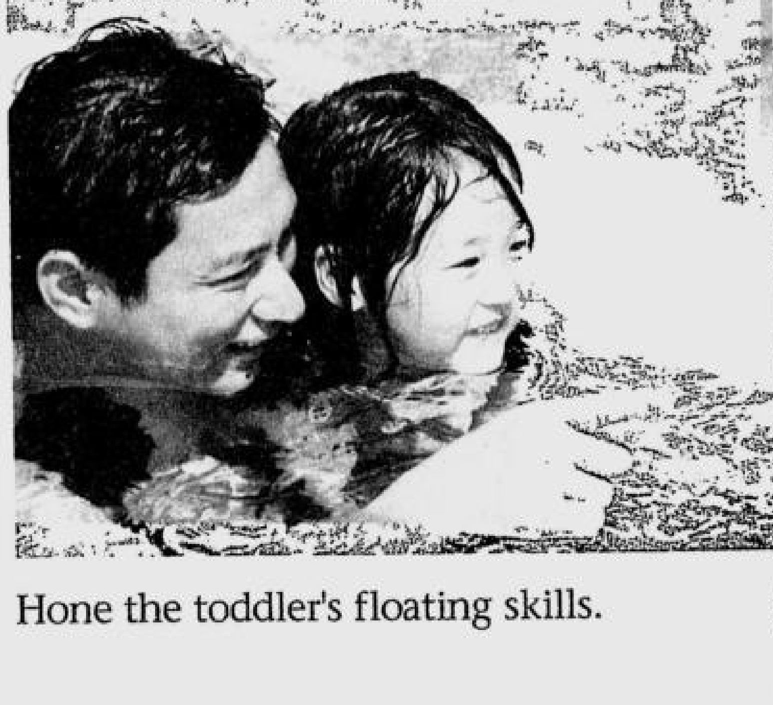


Meditate by a reflecting pool.



Hone the toddler's floating skills.

Enjoy a barbecue cookout with neighbors.

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At the Residential Resort at Newport City, each day is a celebration waiting to happen.

Join us for two days of family fun and entertainment on
**May 12, Sat.**, and **May 13, Sun.**, from **10 am to 5 pm**,
at the **Newport City Grand Showroom.**
Lunch and refreshments will be served.

Newport City Information Centre, Newport City, Pasay City, Metro Manila, Philippines
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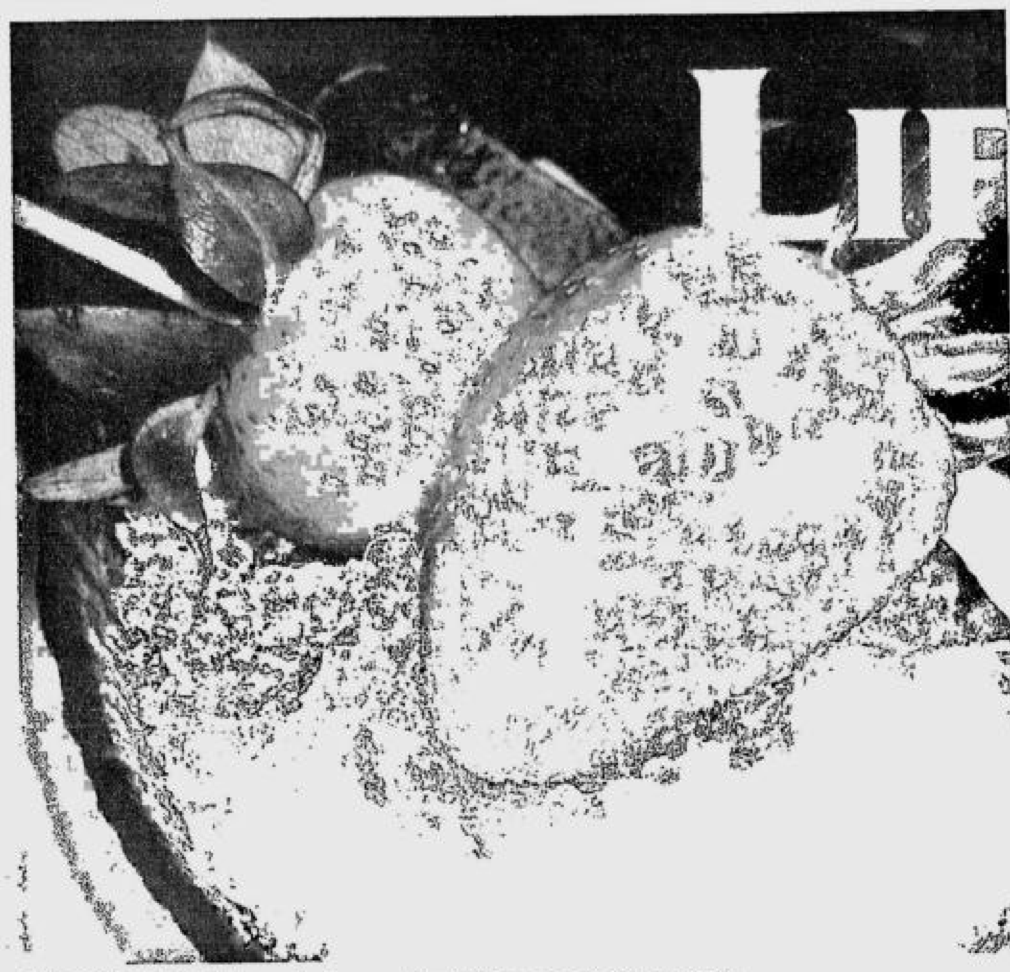

STRAWBERRIES belong to the rose family (Rosaceae). The name is derived from "straw," which is used to mulch the plants.

C3'S STRAWBERRY Shortcake

BALSAMIC Berries with White Chocolate & Mascarpone Cream

KITCHEN RESCUE
*Reggie Aspiras*

# Berry easy and delightful desserts

YOU HAVE BEEN FEATURING strawberry cakes lately. I love strawberries! I was wondering if there is a good recipe for them. Do you have a strawberry shortcake recipe? Other recipes would be appreciated, too. My mother turns 70 this year and I've been thinking of doing strawberry-theme desserts since they are her favorite, too. Hope you could help.
MRS. MANABAT

Few fruits are quite as beloved as the strawberry. Here are some facts to help you get to know the fruit "berry" well.

"Strawberries belong to the rose family (Rosaceae). The name is derived from 'straw' which was used to mulch the plants. Children strung the berries in straw and sold them in the markets of London as 'straws of berries.'

"It is known as an accessory fruit, that is, the fleshy part is derived not from the ovaries (which are the 'seeds'). Technically, the seeds are the actual fruits of the plant, and the flesh of the strawberry is a vegetable.

"It is the only fruit with seeds on the outside, an average of 200 seeds to a berry.

"It is a symbol of perfection, righteousness, prosperity and peace.

"Fruit of love, an aphrodisiac, it is the symbol of Venus, the Goddess of Love, because of its shape and color.

"Baskets of wild strawberries are hung on cattle horns in parts of Bavaria as offerings to elves whose favorite fruit are strawberries. The elves, in return, help cattle produce milk in abundance and have healthy calves.

"French explorer Cartier brought strawberries back to France from Quebec in 1534. It is to the French that we owe the cultivation of the berry, thanks to King Louis XIV and his royal gardener Jean de la Quintinie who made detailed studies.

"French court ladies bathed in the juice of 22 pounds of berries per basin. Lucky for the berry they did not bathe every day. Madame Tallien, of the court of Emperor Napoleon, was most famous for this practice.

"It prevents/alleviates fainting, inflammations, fevers, throat infections, kidney stones, bad breath, melancholy, gout, and diseases of the blood, liver and spleen, or so the ancient Romans believed.

"Low fat, low calorie, high in vitamin C, fiber, folic acid and potassium, it can help reduce the risk of cancer and heart attacks.

*(Sources—United States Department of Agriculture, "The Berry Man" and the "London Strawberry Festival")*

## C3's Strawberry Shortcake

I discovered this shortcake when I was out food-tasting with my good friend Miriam Balingit for her mom's 80th birthday, which was held at C3 (Happy Birthday, Mama Ely!). The comfort-food type! Thanks to chefs James Antolin and Maud Ariane Jimenez for the recipe.

If you decide that it is better to buy than to bake, call 7262712. They accept orders. And

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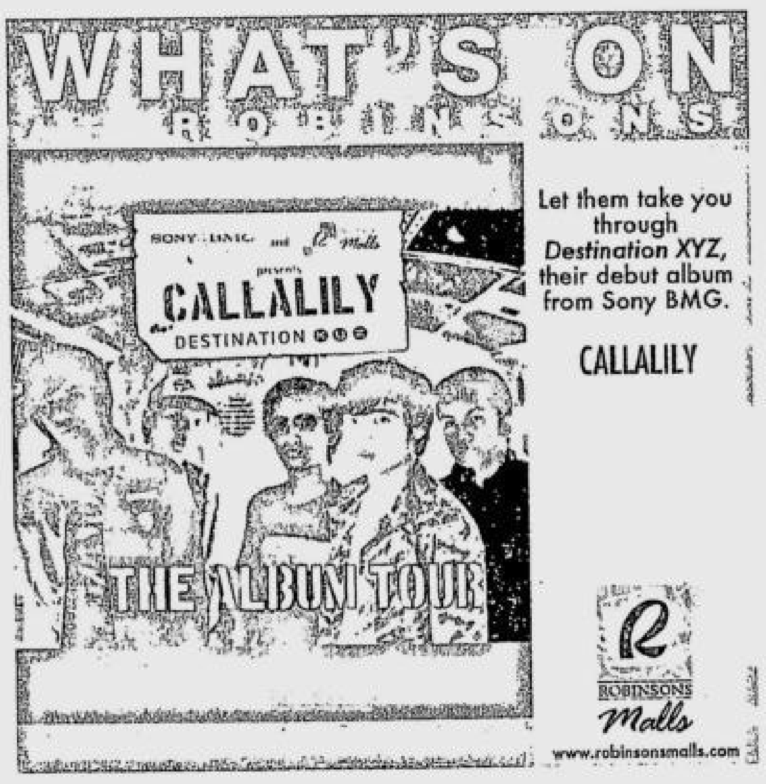

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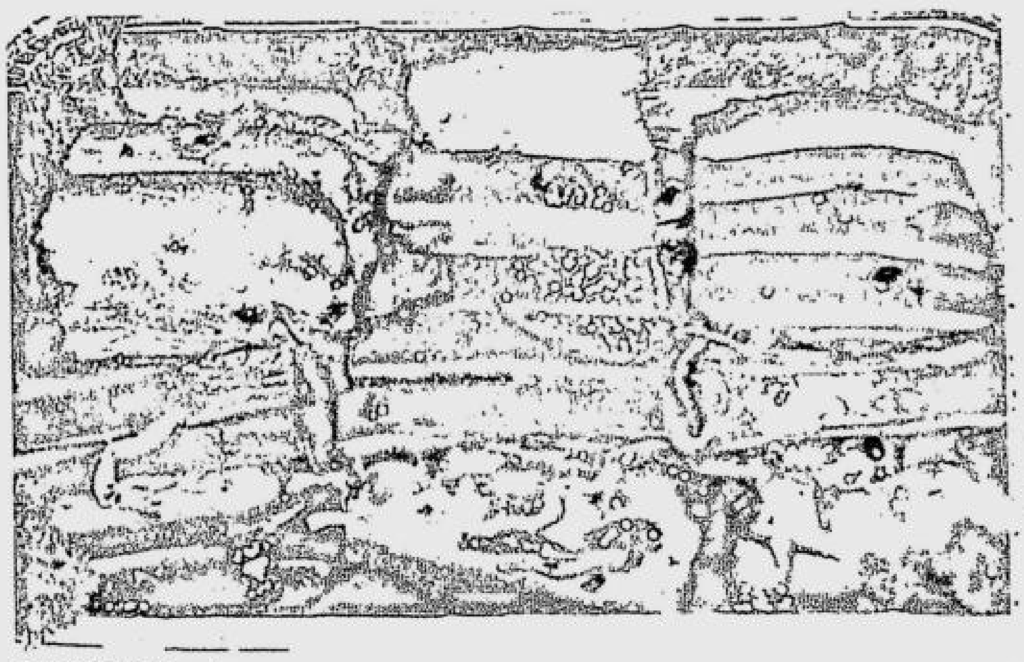
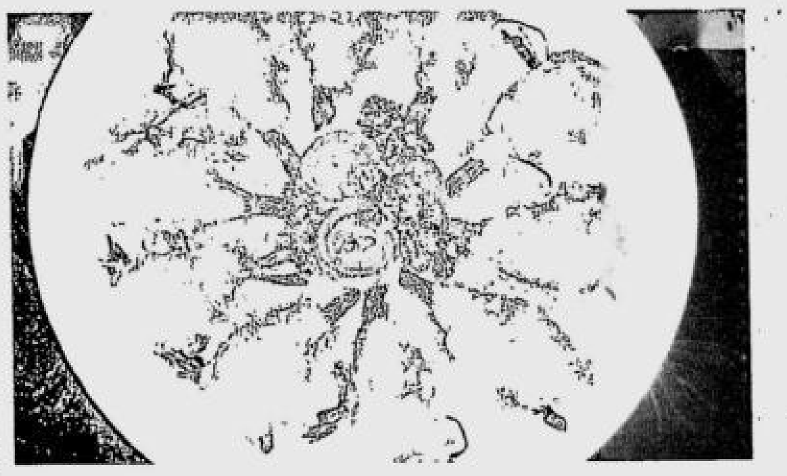
CABALEN'S Embotido



CABALEN'S Humba

# Dining with Mom



IT IS A DOUBLE CELEBRATION AT CABALEN THIS May with Mother's Day and Pistahan sa Cabalen.

This Mother's Day, celebrate your love for Mom by treating her and the rest of the family to a meal at Cabalen where you can eat all you can of a wide array of dishes for only P249 plus value-added tax.

Enjoy Quilain Tuna or Tanigue, Halaan Kalabasa Soup, Humba, Asado Manok, Lechon de Leche, Relleno Bangus, Tinapa Rice and *sorbetes*.

Mom can get the chance to win exciting prizes from Ideal Vision and St. Andrews Bath Essentials.

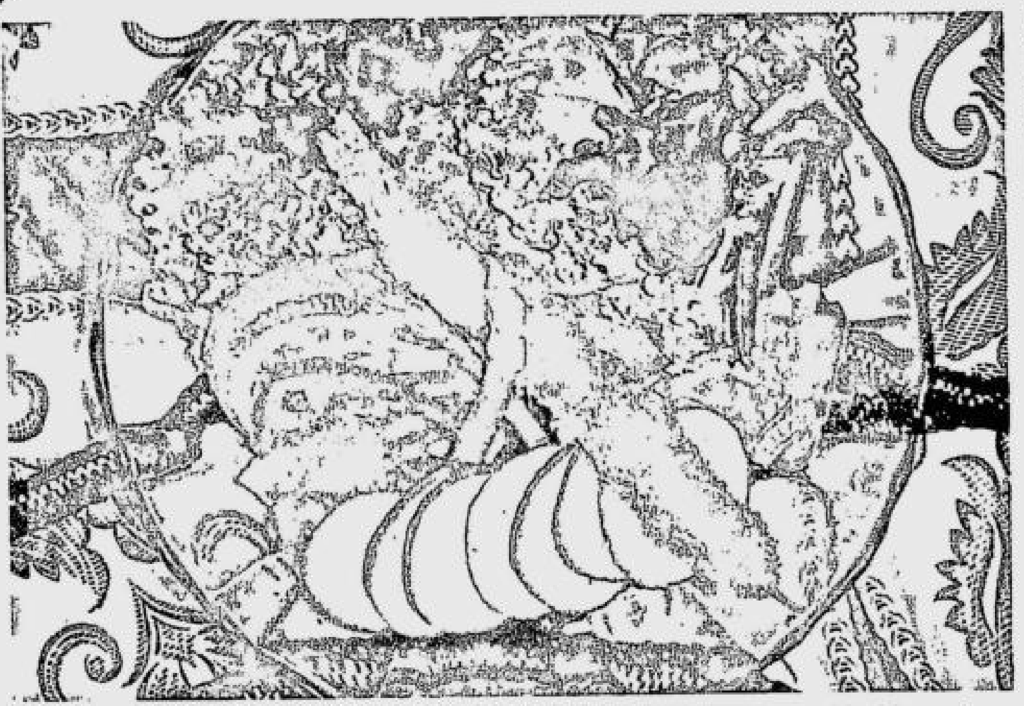
To join the Pick a Prize promo, simply dine at Cabalen with your mom and the whole family and avail of the special buffet meal offer and make it a most memorable Mother's Day celebration for the whole family.

Cabalen Restaurants are at 67 West Ave., Quezon City; 2/L SM City North Edsa, QC; G/F SM City Clark CSEZ, Clarkfield, Pampanga; 4/L Bldg. B, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong; 3/L Chefs Avenue, Festival Mall, Alabang, Muntinlupa City; 2/L Robinsons Place Ermita, Manila; Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, Makati; G/L Robinsons Starmills, San Fernando, Pampanga; G/F Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall, Cainta, Rizal. Opening soon is Cabalen Trinoma (tel. 9111584).

Cabalen can also help you have a hassle- and worry-free party through its Cabalen's Catering Services that promises impeccable service and great menu selection to suit your budget and needs (tel. 4219220 or 9135522).

**SOFITEL** Philippine Plaza Manila's (tel. 5515555) Spiral offers Mom lobsters as interpreted in the seven different international stations. Toast Mom with overflowing champagne, wine and healthy fruit smoothies. Mothers receive a beauty starter kit from Shu Uemura and have a chance to win gifts from Jewelmer. French pastries and cakes are available at Gallette, the newest patisserie at the Lobby. Le Bar, the bistro-bar-library, has a wide selection of books to choose from as Mom drinks coffee or tea.

**MANDARIN ORIENTAL'S** (tel. 7508888) Paseo Uno offers Mother's Day Buffet consisting of cold dishes and desserts for P1,488 for adults, and P788 for children. Tin Hau serves dim sum, appetizers, soup, chefs' specialties for main courses, and desserts for buffet dinner and lunch at P980 for adults and P490 for children. The Tivoli has a buffet of appetizers and desserts and a choice of main courses—Potato-crusted Halibut Fillet with White Chocolate accompanied by Leek Fondue and Caviar Sauce, or Mushroom-stuffed Supreme of Cornish Hen accompanied by Creamed Cabbage with Veal Shank and Sauce Mousseline plus Balsamic-glazed Cherry Tomatoes at P1,488 (adults) and P788 (kids). A five-course set menu for dinner is also available at P2,188 for adults and P1,188 for children.



**KIMPURA makes Mother's Day a fun day. Teppan chefs will cook at teppanyaki tables and serve moms freshly cooked Japanese dishes. Kimpura is also giving away Japanese fans to all moms who come for lunch or dinner. Open daily for lunch and dinner, Kimpura is on the second level of Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati City (8932307, 8928274); and Greenhills Shopping Center, San Juan (7218816, 7218851).**

**DISCOVERY SUITES'** Restaurant 5 offers an assortment of salads, antipasti, cold appetizers, hot dishes, carvings and desserts for P895+ per person. As a bonus, mothers dining at the restaurant will receive special gift items from Crabtree & Evelyn, Rustan's Marketing Corp., Mossimo and Foreign Post.

**RESTAURANT VERBENA** features chef David Pardo de Ayala's six-course lunch and dinner menu on Mother's Day. Moms will receive a complimentary glass of wine and special gift from Crabtree & Evelyn, discount vouchers from Rustan's Marketing Corp. and Foreign Post. They also get to have a souvenir of this occasion with a complimentary family portrait taken by a professional photographer.

**THE PENINSULA MANILA** (tel. 8872888) celebrates Mother's Day with special lunch and dinner buffets. The Lobby Brunch Buffet is priced at P1,400+ (adults) and P720+ (children below 12 years old); The Upper Lobby Afternoon Tea is priced at P550+; Nielsen's Brunch Buffet is priced at P1,250+ (adult) and P750+ (children below 12 years old); Mi Piace and Spices offer a la carte lunch and dinner.

**CENTURY PARK HOTEL'S** (tel. 5288888) Café in the Park features Chef's Special consisting of "Motherterranean Style" Beef Tenderloin Steak with Honey Balsamic Sauce, Parfait Seabass Fillet Gratinated with Hollandaise and Crab Cake a la Mama and Scallops Tempura. Also a must-try is the Loin of Lamb in Olive Crust with Thyme Sauce. Purchase of a Mother's Day Cake at the Deli Snack entitles you to a coupon for the raffle on May 13.

**HYATT Hotel and Casino's** (tel. 2451234) Li Li celebrates Mother's Day with chef Choi's special brunch featuring Hot and Sour Soup, Wok-fried Chicken Fillet and Cuttlefish with Asparagus and Shimeji Mushrooms in XO Sauce. The Fireplace offers a five-course family-style set menu. The Market Café has lunch and dinner buffets for P1,388+ each. Mothers who will dine with four or more family members or friends will take home a complimentary Bulgari Body Set (valued at P880). Mothers who make reservations early get an exclusive 10-percent discount card they can use in any of the dining outlets.

The first 100 moms who will eat at any **Super Bowl of China** branch on Mother's Day, May 13, will get a 50-percent discount coupon on facial services at all Body & Face by Dr. Joel Mendez and Weigh Less Center branches (except Sofitel Philippine Plaza branch). Mothers who dine with a family of four at any branch May 6-20 will get free Broccoli Flowers with Garlic. Super Bowl favorites include Steamed Fish Fillet with Garlic, Sweet and Sour Pork, Szechuan Shrimp, Hakao, Crispy Noodles with Assorted Seafood and Lemon Chicken.

**MARIO'S KITCHEN** now serves breakfast. Choose from Garden Fresh Omelettes and Eggs Benedict, Tender Beef Tapa or the Bangus Belly a la Pobre. Mario's Kitchen also serves a variety of Spanish and Continental dishes. The restaurant is located at Tiendesitas at Frontera Verde, Ugong corner C-5, Pasig City (tel. 6314367).

**MXT Tea House** (formerly Maxim's Tea House) has a special treat "Just for Moms." It features freebies and discount cards from fashion store Maldita, Fabric House and Zen Zest for moms who dine and avail of the set menu May 11-13. Moms can also bring home goodie bags packed with 250 grams *pancit canton* and *butchi*.

**GERRY'S GRILL** (tel. 4211111) offers special Mother's Day dishes. Restaurant bestsellers include Sizzling Sisig, Blue Marlin Steak, Crispy Pata, Beef Casserole, Beef Kaldereta, Bicol Express, Crispy Tadyang, Oriental Tuna Sashimi, Garlic Adobo Shreds.

**DENCIO'S** has two special treats for moms this Mother's Day. A free bar of Goat's Milk Soap will be given to mothers who dine at Dencio's May 12-13. Promo is applicable while supplies last. Each bar of soap comes with a Bounce Back Gift Tag that entitles moms to a free Turon de Sorbetes on her next visit. The tag is valid until June 15. It is applicable only for dine-in transactions. Dencio's (tel. 8190155) has branches at Rockwell, CCP Complex, Metrowalk, Eastwood, Scout Albano, Banawe, Brittany Bay, Greenhills, Araneta Center, Capitol Hills, Jupiter, Las Piñas, Paseo Center, Robinsons Ermita, SM Megamall, Paseo de Magallanes, Tarlac, Camp John Hay, SM Baguio, SM City Clark, Robinsons Dasmariñas, Robinsons Starmills and Tagaytay.

**SUSHI-YA** gives mom free Kani salad if you order a Teriyaki Bento Box for two. Complete the special occasion with a side order of Dynamite Roll—Salmon Sashimi, Ebi Tempura and Tuna Sashimi. Now on its 10th year, Sushi-Ya also serves tempura and many more. Sushi-Ya has branches at Westgate Alabang, SM Megamall Building B; L/G, Market! Market!; Robinsons Galleria; Robinsons Place Ermita, Libis and Tomas Morato; Fiesta Strip SM City Pampanga (tel. 6319998 or 3723721).

**BURGOO** has prepared two special dishes for Mother's Day, Grilled USDA Steak and Shrimps Kebab and Poached Chilean Seabass Steak. On Mother's Day, with every order of any of these dishes, mothers will receive a tote bag from Burgoo (tel. 9277424, 6875254, 8981815, 7263578, 9136112, 6336256, 5560092 and 4420115).

**GUMBO** salutes all moms with special dishes for Mother's Day: Grilled USDA Steaks and Scallops and the Seafood Duo (fish fillet and baby prawns). With an order of any of these dishes, mothers get gift certificates worth P250 from Gumbo (tel. 5560238).

**CROWNE** Plaza Galleria Manila has a surprise in store for moms who will dine at Seven Corners restaurant. A special Message to Mom is already displayed on the message board in the restaurant. Families are encouraged to drop in before Mother's Day to scribble personal greetings to mom. On May 13, all mothers who will avail of Seven Corners' buffet will get flowers. Seven Corners restaurant (tel. 6337222) is at 3/L Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila in Ortigas Center.

**PEKING GARDEN celebrates Mother's Day with a special set menu. Prepared by its Hong Kong main chefs, Peking Garden's set menu is good for 12 persons and includes four kinds of appetizers, shark's fin with shredded chicken in papaya soup, Peking duck, crispy almond prawns, steamed *lapu-lapu* in hot chili sauce, steamed fish maw with minced garlic and black pepper, deep-fried peppercorn crabs, fried rice with abalone and seafood, and fresh fruit platter for dessert, all at P13,800+. Peking Garden is on the second level of Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati (8179066/67). It is open daily for lunch and dinner.**

**SOFITEL Philippine Plaza Manila's (tel. 5515555) Spiral offers Mom lobsters as interpreted in the seven different international stations.**

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# Berry easy and delightful desserts

From page C1

if you ever choose C3 for your event, have Ariane do your cake. I designed a cake for the party and she executed it. It was beautiful! Ariane, how proud I am of the work of your hands!

**Sponge:**

5 eggs
5 egg yolks
100 g white sugar

Beat eggs and yolks for five minutes.

Gradually add sugar and beat until ribbon stage, another five minutes.

5 egg whites
190 g white sugar
120 g all-purpose flour

Whip whites until frothy. Gradually add sugar. Beat until it forms stiff peaks.

Alternately fold in egg yolk and egg-white mixtures into flour.

Pour on greased and lined baking trays. Bake at pre-heated 180°C oven for eight minutes.

**Chantilly cream:**

500 ml nondairy whipping cream such as Pour N' Whip (Sweet Craft, tel. 5321595; Unimart; Rustan's)
1 tbsp powdered sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract

Whip in mixer until it forms stiff peaks.

**Assembly:**

Sponge
Fresh strawberries
Chantilly cream
Syrup (½ c each of water and sugar, boil until slightly thickened)

Brush sponge with syrup. Arrange sliced strawberries.

Spread cream. Top with another layer of sponge. Brush with syrup.

Decorate top with cream and berries. Chill.

## Strawberry desserts

I am also sharing two of my easy yet delicious strawberry desserts. Happy, happy birthday to your mom! How lucky you are to have her by your side still at 70!

### Balsamic Berries with White Chocolate & Mascarpone Cream

4 tbsp balsamic vinegar
¼-½ c sugar, adjust to taste
1 k strawberries, quartered

Combine ingredients in a bowl. Mix well.

Let mixture sit for 15 minutes or until sugar is dissolved. Chill.

Before serving, top with cream and garnish with mint.

1 c mascarpone cheese
¼ c cream

Bring to a boil. Take off the stove and add 100 g of chopped white chocolate. Cool.

1 c cream, whipped with powdered sugar (adjust sweetness to taste)
1 tsp vanilla powder (I use Ferna)

Lightly beat mascarpone. Fold in white

### Pann
Mint

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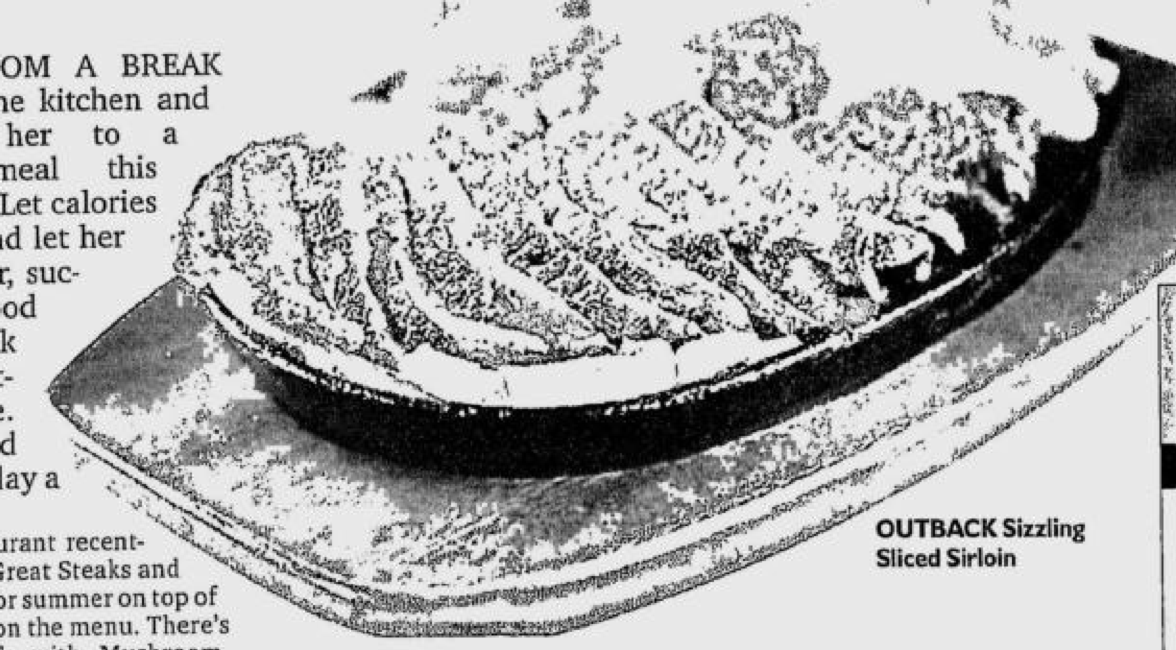
# *Let them eat steak*

y Irene C. Perez



**OUTBACK Sizzling Sliced Sirloin**

GIVE MOM A BREAK from the kitchen and treat her to a lelectable meal this Mother's Day. Let calories be damned and let her enjoy a tender, succulent, good piece of steak with a nice bottle of wine. Splurge and make mom's day a no-diet day.

Outback restaurant recently launched the Great Steaks and Sizzlers perfect for summer on top of their bestsellers on the menu. There's the Garlic Steak with Mushroom, tasty beef bites tossed with fresh garlic and Outback's in-house seasonings.

Other must-tries are the Sizzling Sliced Sirloin and Tender Tenderloin Tips that will create new cravings for mommy. All come with sides of sauteed mushrooms, chef veggies and crispy potato wedges.

## Steaks galore

Meticulous moms are assured to get the freshest as the steaks are grilled to order. "We take pride in our meats which are sourced from the United States and Australia," says Rommel Ng, Outback operating partner.

Clueless on how you want your steak done? Ask attentive servers which among rare, medium rare and medium well would work for you best.

Meant for sharing with the entire family are huge servings from the Great Steaks selection like the 6-oz Filet Mignon of well-chosen beef tenderloin, and the 8-oz Aussie Teriyaki Sirloin, char-broiled steak glazed with Outback's original teriyaki dressing. Perfect pairs for these are the Steakhouse Pasta with fresh tomatoes and steak bits, and the Fresh Baked Ziti with loads of herbs and cheese.

## Kid's chow

Kids will love the new appetizers such as Honey BBQ Wing, a twist on the classic Kookaburrra Wings, and Fried Baby Rack Shrimp, bite-size shrimps on a bed of fried noodles.

They may also choose from a variety of Kid's Meals in smaller portions like Kid's Spaghetti, Kookaburra Fingers, Spaghetti and Wings Combo, and Boomerang Cheese Burger with Aussie Chips. Barbecue lovers, on the other hand, would love the new Aussie and Pork BBQ Platters.

Worried that mom's BP might shoot up? A light meal of Outback salads will do. Choose from Classic or Shrimp Ceasar, Chook Tender, Cobb and Oriental Salads. Vegetarians would love the fresh Mixed Green Salad as well.

And what's a great meal without dessert? Try out the new Choco Choco Cookie, a sweet treat of giant freshly baked cookie topped with vanilla ice cream and drizzled with chocolate syrup.

## Mittens for mommy

"We update our menu twice a year to give our customers more choices," says Ng. "And Outback also has a special treat on Mother's Day—all mothers who will dine in will receive a kitchen mitten for free."

Aside from families, most of their clients are yuppies and expats that's why they extended their Makati store hours from midnight to 3 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. That's loads of "happy hours" for everyone. Outback also gives diners in a hurry the Fast Lunch Packages at Alabang Town Center.

*Outback branches are in Glorietta, Makati (tel. 7298459); Alabang Town Center (6343801); and Libis (7221845).*

**SWEET treat for mommy. Choco Choco Cookie**

IRENE PEREZ

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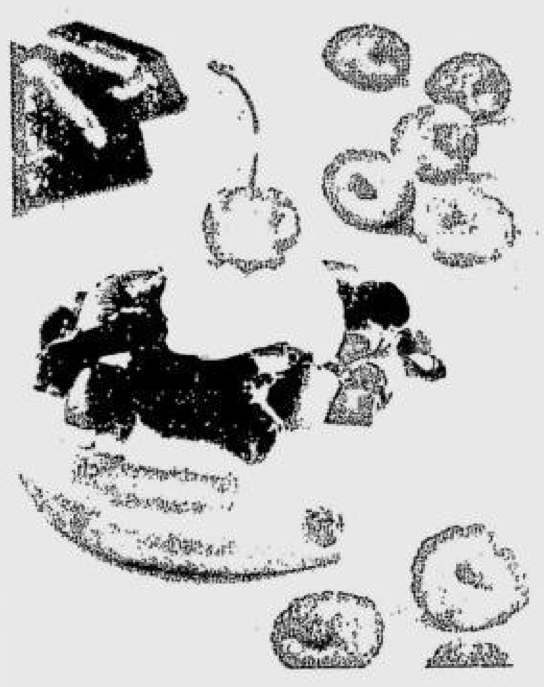
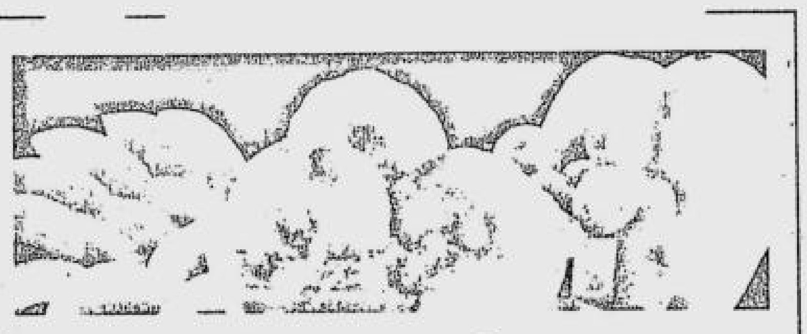


**BLACK FOREST DOUGHNUT FOR MOMMY** Krispy Kreme, with branches in Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig and at SM Megamall Bldg. B, comes up with a special variety for Mother's Day. The Black Forest doughnut features rich raspberry filling, hand-dipped in creamy vanilla icing, sprinkled with premium chocolate curls and topped with a sweet cherry. Available starting May 10.



# *The classics for Mom*

MOMS CAN ENJOY A COOL Mother's Day with Magnolia Ice Cream's all-time favorite flavors.

Magnolia Classics in Mango and Ube flavors are sure to stir up good old memories. Moms will likely also enjoy the familiar taste of Magnolia Gold Label classics Macapuno with Ube Swirl and Creamy Halo-Halo.

In addition, Magnolia has also come up with two limited-edition flavors just for the hot season.

The special variants not only have extra flavor but are also loaded with real fruit bits.

Chocoholics can choose Mud Pie Banana Surprise, a medley of mud-pie ice cream, chunks of chewy brownies and ripe bananas.

Fruit lovers may want to try Peach Mango Melba, Del Monte sun-riped peaches combined with mangoes.

Magnolia Ice Cream is available at supermarkets and grocery stores. It is also now available at neighborhood Monterey meat shops and San Miguel Food Shops.

chocolate mixture. Fold in cream.

### a Cotta with
### ed Strawberries

cream
¼ c sugar
sp unflavored gelatin
nilla bean scraped or 1 tsp vanilla
r
nbine ingredients in a saucepan.
sit for 10 minutes until gelatin has
ed. Bring to a boil.
in mixture and pour on ramekins.

Let set. Top with strawberries.

**Minted berries:**

4 tbsp mint leaves, sliced thinly
2 tbsp creme de menthe, optional
¼-½ c sugar, adjust to taste
1 k strawberries, quartered

Combine ingredients in a bowl. Mix well.

Let mixture sit 15 minutes or until sugar is dissolved. Chill.

*E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph*

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- Don't forget to match your foundation with your skin tone.
- Don't forget to *not* match your eye shadow with your eye color.
- Don't forget the wrong concealer says *Take a look at this!*
- Don't forget to put on blush in places where you actually blush.
- Don't forget beauty sleep doesn't mean sleeping with makeup on.
- Don't forget brushing alone is not enough.

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## THE CONSUMER

# Processed meat producer warns against impostors

**By Linda B. Bolido**

PAMPANGA'S BEST, ONE OF THE country's premier manufacturers of quality processed meat products, is warning the public against unscrupulous individuals offering all sorts of "attractive deals."

The company, which currently makes 30 products, including *tocino, longganisa, and tapa*, has received reports that certain individuals have found a lucrative "business" offering dealership to *sari-sari* store owners and market vendors.

These individuals offer "package deals" unauthorized by the company and supply highly overpriced products, among others.

Though it is perhaps a measure of its success that people are finding it easy to "sell" Pampanga's Best, the company, which has been in the food business for more than 40 years, is not happy over the unscrupulous use of its name. Stressing that it has not authorized these people, Pampanga's Best urges the public to check with the company before accepting any deals offered to them.

If you have been approached by anyone claiming to be an agent or representative of Pampanga's Best, call 9281905, (045)9616245, or 0917-5007323. Pampanga's Best, which is now also distributed in the Middle East, has received the "Sangkap Pinoy" seal from the Bureau of Food and Drugs in recognition of its observance of the guidelines on food fortification as mandated by law. Its products are enriched with essential micro nutrients such as Vitamin A, iron, and iodine at levels approved as safe by the World Health Organization and Food and Agricultural Organization.

### Consumerism lessons

Product quality and safety will be taught students starting this June, through the collaborative efforts of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Department of Education (DepEd).

The necessary modules and lesson plans on standards were finalized during the Second Writeshop organized by the DTI's Bureau of Product Standards (DTI-BPS), in collaboration with DepEd's Bureaus of Alternative Learning System and of Secondary Education and with assistance of the Philippine Product Safety and Quality Foundation (PPSQF).

Undersecretary for Consumer Welfare Zenaida Cuison Maglaya said the DTI recognized the importance of preparing the youth to become vigilant consumers conscious about the quality and safety of products.

Maglaya said students could also influence their families and communities to choose only quality goods.

Four modules and seven lesson plans on standards were prepared, focusing on products commonly used by consumers: compact fluorescent lamp, liquefied petroleum gas cylinder, automotive battery and flat glass.

Lessons are directed toward high-school students and "mobile learners" composed of out-of-school youth, adults, and individuals with special needs.

The modules include input from the Philippine Battery Manufacturers Association, Flat Glass Alliance of the Philippines and LPG Industry Association.

BPS director Jesus L. Motoomull said teachers and instructional managers nationwide would be trained in the use of the new teaching materials.

Final copies of the modules and lesson plans would be printed and distributed before the start of school year 2007-2008.

By the third quarter of the year the DTI, DepEd and PPSQF will assess the effectiveness of the teaching materials.

*Send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Mascardo and Yague Sts., Makati City; or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com.ph*

# Home-cooked comfort food

THE REGGIE ASPIRAS SCHOOL OF CULINARY Arts offers the following classes: May 11—My Favorite Home-cooked Comfort Meals (all new): Swiss Steaks with Creamy Macaroni and Cheese, Korean Stew of Wagyu Beef Cheeks, Asian-style Braised Beef Cheeks with Coconut Risotto, Fall-off-the-bone Braised US Choice Short Ribs with Horseradish Sauce, sides; May 12—Yakitori Japanese Barbecue Party (all new): Beef, Pork, Chicken, Lamb, Seafood; all new marinades, dipping sauces and condiments; Japanese Risotto; dessert; May 14—Butter Cakes (all new): Gooey Butter Cake with Butter Sauce, Molten Butter Cake, Terribly Rich and Dense Butter Cake, Apple Pie with Butter Sauce, Butter Rum Cake; May 16—Fondue '07 (all new): Cheese Fondue with Homemade Puffs done three ways: Italian Pizza Style, German Style with Sausages, Best Ever Cheese, Bonus Variation with Truffles; Beef Chinese Style, My New Take on the Classic Bourguignonne (even more delicious sauces), Brownie Fondue; sides (tel. 9289296; 9273008).

### Chinese cooking

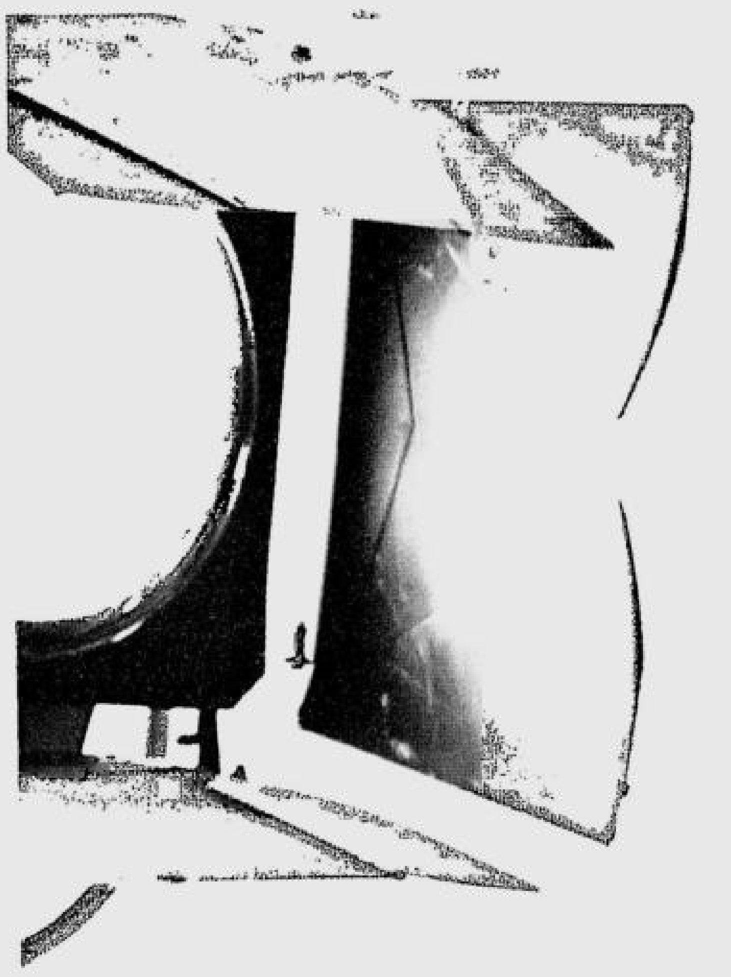
Brush up on your stir-frying skills in Maya Kitchen's Chinese Cooking May 12, 2-6 p.m. Covered are Pata Tim, Siomai, Kikiam, Chinese Fresh Lumpia, Pork Spareribs with Blackbeans and Almond Jello. Coffee 101 (Barista Class) is scheduled May 19, 2-6 p.m., while Fundamentals of Bakery Production will be held May 22-25, 2-6 p.m. Kakanin, 2-6 p.m. on May 26, covers Cassava Cake, Pichi Pichi, Cuchinta, Maja Nangka, Putong Puti, Bibingkang Malagkit and Homemade Salabat. Basic Culinary on May 29-June 1, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., discusses the basic principles of proper hygiene, sanitation and safety; nutrition and nutritional cooking; use of herbs and spices; proper purchasing; storage; techniques of disjointing and boning poultry; filleting fish and meat fabrication. Actual preparation of dishes from appetizer to dessert is also included. Enrollees get a free "Mix and Match" cookbook. Young People's Cook-In (YPCI), for 13 years old and up, will be conducted May 23-25, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Maya Kitchen is at 8/F, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue (formerly Pasay Road), Makati City (tel. 8921185 or 8925011 local 108; e-mail mkitchen@ultimate.info.com.ph).

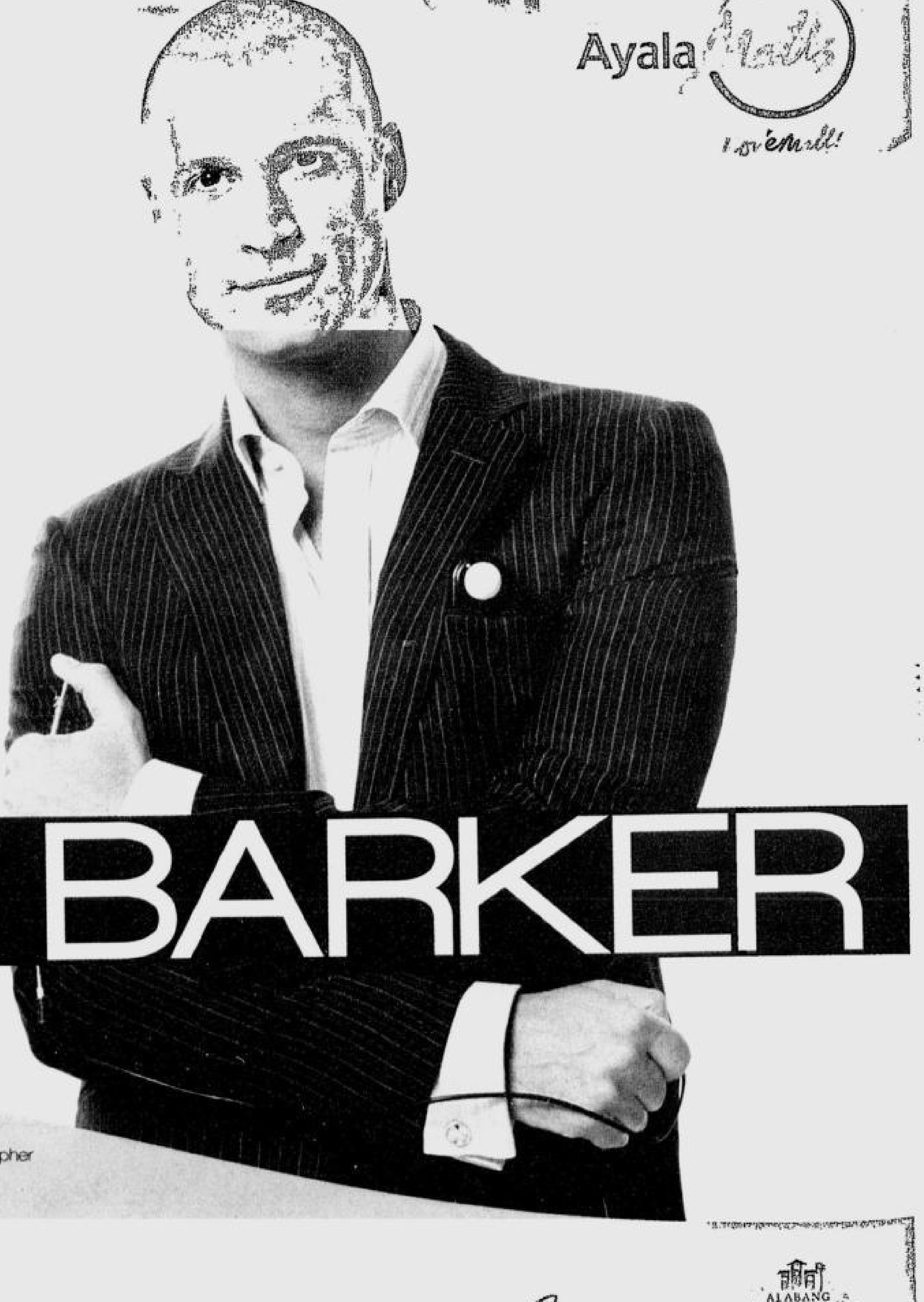
### Baking at Dorothy's

Dorothy's Cooking School offers cooking, baking and cake decorating workshops this month. Baked classics such as canonigo, brazo de mercedes and other grandma's recipes will be showcased May 10. Different types of *pancit* like *lomi*, *pancit habhab* and *palabok* from scratch is scheduled May 12 (tel. 7217735, 4167968).

The school, owned by cookbook author Dorothy Ferreria, is located in New Manila, Quezon City.

Ayala Malls
I love malls!





A ONE-SHOT ENCOUNTER WITH
NIGEL BARKER

Get inspiring tips on fashion photography from Nigel Barker, celebrity photographer and judge of America's Next Top Model as he hits Ayala Malls this May.

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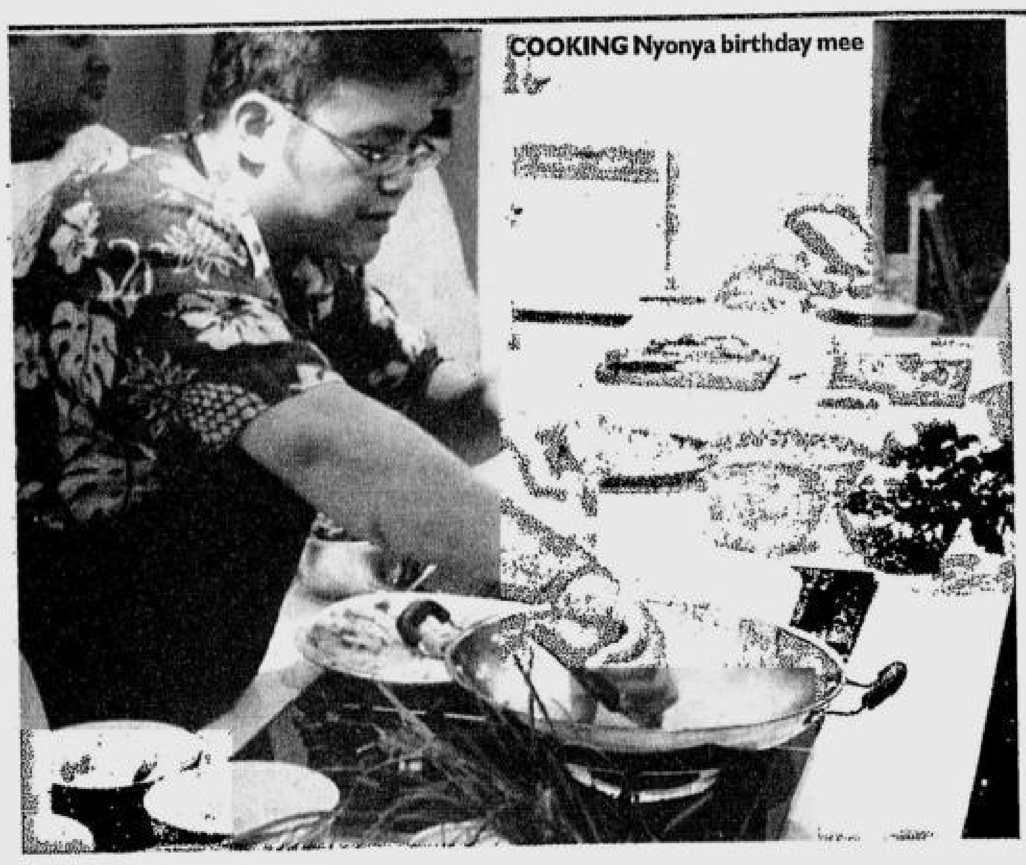
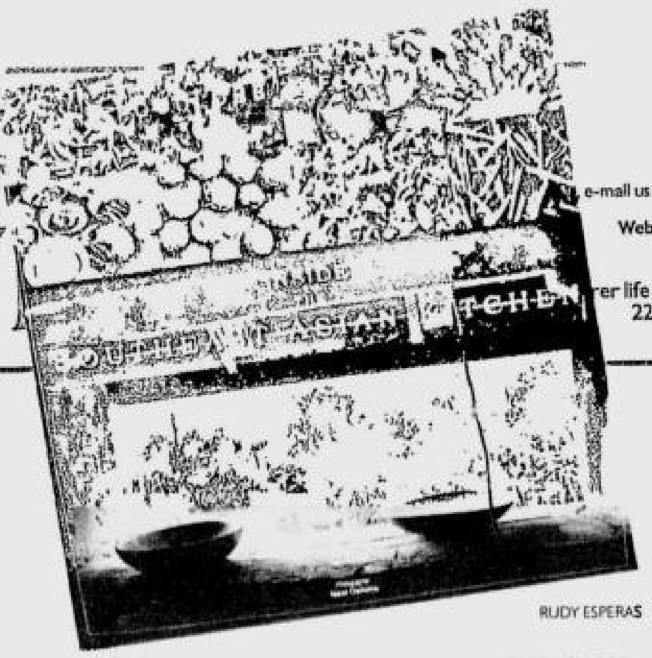


**COOKING** Nyonya birthday mee



RUDY ESPERAS

COUNTRY COOKING
*Micky Fenix*

# Interacting with a Singaporean cook

> Christopher Tan agrees that the market is the best place to know what ingredients are used in an area and how

MY FIRST MEETING WITH Christopher Tan, food writer from Singapore, was at the launch of the book "Inside the Southeast Asian Kitchen."

Though we were contributors for our respective countries, we had only communicated with the book's editor, Tan Su Lyn, and never with each other. But, at the end of the week, we shared stories and agreed about most things culinary.

As part of the launch, we both participated in a cooking workshop at the Miele kitchen, showroom of the German maker of kitchen equipment. Chris had much more to do because he had to conduct a cooking demonstration of Nyonya birthday mee (noodles). It's a must in every Peranakan birthday celebration, said Chris.

He should know. He is Peranakan, the mix of Malay and Chinese. That is just one of the many peoples of Singapore that also include Chinese, Malay and Indian.

Because of the mix, Singapore cuisine is so varied and so rich. And, while the provenance of each dish served is known, Singaporean cooks have made those dishes their own.

## Re-exported

Chris wrote how the Hainanese chicken rice was really a culinary specialty in the Hainan Island of China transported to Singapore by Hainanese chefs. He noted with amusement that the same dish was re-exported to Hainan and was now called "Singapore chicken rice."

Chris also served as the food stylist of the book and tested the recipes. He told me that,

INTERACTING/ D3

**CHRIS** Tan preparing to compare *bingka* and *bibingka* with columnist Micky Fenix

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# What's for dinner, Mom?

IT IS SAID THE WAY TO A MAN'S HEART is through his stomach. More than anyone, moms know this is true of their sons.

Regardless of how old men get, the taste and aroma of their mother's cooking will always linger in their hearts. Whether grand or simple, Mom's dishes, always lovingly made, have the power to magically transport them back home. *Lutong nanay* seems to have a special ingredient that brings everyone together. Because of moms, mealtime is even more family time.

We asked some self-professed mama's boys to share their fond memories of meals prepared by their moms, and here's what they had to say:

**NEVER too old to be a Mama's boy: Busy film and TV star Zanjoe Marudo finds time to bond with mom Rosanna, and siblings Zossane and Zandro.**

**MAMA knows best: Metro's Ipe Cruz with esteemed mother Gina de Venecia**

### Zanjoe Marudo, actor

My mom can make really good Bicol Express. Pork with *gata*, yum! I remember we'd run out of rice whenever she served her Bicol Express. To take away a bit of the spice, we'd always have a *litro* of Coke at the table.

I miss my mom's cooking because nowadays I'm too busy with work to dine with my family. I get nostalgic thinking about family dinners when we would sit around the table and enjoy my mom's cooking and *siyempre* the company.

### Marvin Wijangco Raymundo, model

My family is from Pampanga and everyone knows that Kapampangans are amazing cooks. My mom is no exception. I do a lot of shuttling back and forth between Manila and Pampanga. When I hear that she's cooking, believe me, I'm there.

All it takes is for my mom to tell us that she's making *sisig* or chicken *adobo*, and the whole family will be rushing to the table. Actually, that's my mom's secret to get us all together for dinners. And her *leche flan* is her secret for making us stay longer around the dining table as a family. Wow, I'm having a mental picture of her food, complete with a glass of Coke! I hope she texts me tonight.

### Enchong Dee, champion swimmer

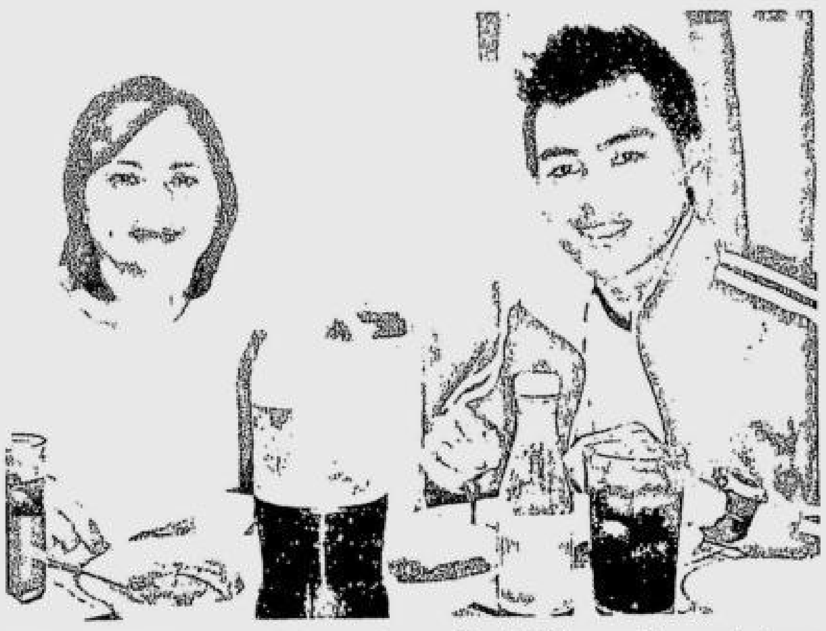
I have so many fond memories of meals prepared by my mom. We pretty much love it when she cooks. The most recent memory I have is when my mom prepared everything for my 17th birthday, including baked salmon floating in butter. Together with a great salad and ice cold Coke, it was a feast fit for a king—or at least for my whole family.

I think the party became more fun because we enjoyed what she prepared. Much of the fun transpired at the table, talking, laughing, helping ourselves to more servings of that salmon. Okay, now I'm hungry.

### Ipe Cruz, magazine executive

What comes to mind is that time when we rented a house up in snowy Vermont during one family vacation. Mom spent the whole day cooking big *bandehados* of her signature Filipino dishes—beef *mechado*, chicken *afritada* and *sinigang na salmon* with a large serving of fried bananas for dessert. Although we were so far away from Manila, she made us feel at ease, as if we were back home, thanks to her food.

**WE LOVE you, Mom! Champion swimmer Enchong Dee (far right) sharing fun times at the table with caring mom Teresa, together with dad Johnson, and siblings Angelica and Ice.**



**MAMA MIA! Though model-turned-actor Marvin Wijangco Raymundo loves his Kapampangan food, he loves his Kapampangan mom Rosario more.**

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# Special and easy recipes you can do for Mom

GIVE MOMS A BREAK ON THEIR SPECIAL day!

San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center shares these delicious, easy-to-do recipes that you or another member of the family can do for mom.

Check out other recipes and more at www.mygreatfood.com.

### Fruit Salad Cake

**FRUIT Salad Cake**

2 blocks Magnolia Gold Butter, softened
8 pc egg yolks
1 c sugar
½ c Magnolia Fresh Milk
2 can fruit cocktail, drained
1 can peaches, drained and sliced into ¼-inch cubes
3 packs lady fingers
¼ c powdered sugar

In a mixing bowl, whisk butter until light. Add egg yolks alternately with the sugar making sure the sugar is dissolved before the next addition. Add the milk last. Stir in the fruit cocktail and sliced peaches.

In a 8x13" rectangular dish, line bottom with lady fingers. Spread half of the fruit and butter mixture on top of the lady fingers. Top with lady fingers, then the remaining fruit and butter mixture, then layer with lady fingers again.

Dust with powdered sugar before serving.

Serves seven to eight.

### Rustic Chicken and Baby Potato Salad

8 pc Magnolia Chicken Station Breast Fillet
1 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
5 pc tea bags
1 c uncooked rice
½ k baby potatoes, scrubbed, halved and boiled
2 stalks celery, sliced
1 pc beet, peeled, boiled and cut into ¼-inch squares
2 pc carrots, peeled, boiled and cut into ¼-inch squares
1 c pineapple tidbits, drained (reserve juice)
¼ c pickle relish
2 c mayonnaise
Salt
Pepper

Season chicken with salt and pepper. Set aside.

In a big pan with a cover, line bottom with foil. Remove tea leaves from bags and put them and the rice on the foil. Fit with a grill rack just a few inches over the leaves and rice mixture. Arrange the chicken on the grill then cover pan. Heat pan over medium heat until smoke forms and chicken is cooked through. Slice chicken into cubes. Set aside.

In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise, pickle relish, and about ¼ cup of the reserved juice from the pineapple. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside. Combine baby potatoes, celery, beets, carrots, pineapple and smoked chicken in a big salad bowl. Add mayonnaise mixture with the salad components. Mix well. Chill before serving.

Serves four.

### Boneless Chicken Stuffed with Bacon Mushroom Rice

1 pc Magnolia Chicken Station Whole Boneless Chicken
1 tsp salt
1 tsp pepper
1 tsp paprika
2 tbsp Magnolia Gold Butter, softened

**Stuffing:**
2 tbsp Magnolia Nutri-oil
2 tbsp garlic, minced
200 g Purefoods Honeycured Bacon, chopped
100 g porcini mushroom, chopped
100 g button mushroom, chopped
100 g oyster mushroom, chopped
100 g shiitake mushroom, chopped
5 c cooked rice
¼ c all-purpose cream
¼ c mushroom water (water used to hydrate mushrooms)
½ c parmesan cheese
Salt
Pepper

Coat chicken with softened butter (you may also put some under the skin). Season with salt, pepper, and paprika. Set aside.

For the stuffing, sauté garlic in hot oil then add the bacon. Add the mushrooms and cook until mushrooms are wilted, about three minutes. Add rice and mix well. Add all-purpose cream and parmesan cheese. Season with salt and pepper. Let cool.

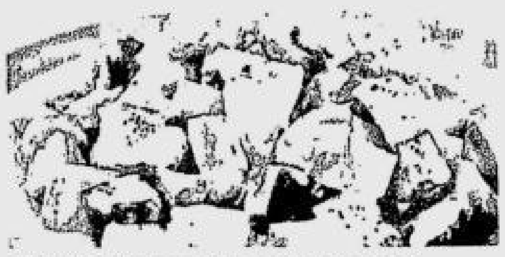
Stuff chicken with rice mixture and tie legs to secure stuffing. Bake at 300°C for 40 minutes. Serve with Creamy Cheese Sauce.

Serves four to five.

**Creamy Cheese Sauce:**
1 block Magnolia Quickmelt Cheese, grated
1 bottle Magnolia Cream Cheese Spread
1 c Magnolia Fresh Milk
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp white pepper
Pinch of paprika

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan. Cook over low heat until cheese is melted. Season with salt, pepper and paprika. Serve warm.

Makes 2½ cups of sauce.



**RUSTIC Chicken & Baby Potato Salad**

### Breaded Lamb Chops

2 tbsp prepared mustard
1 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
1 k Monterey Lamb Chops
1 c Japanese bread crumbs
2 tbsp parsley, chopped
2 tbsp basil, chopped
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
1 c all-purpose flour
4 eggs, beaten
2 c Magnolia Nutri-oil (Palm Olein)

Coat lamb chop pieces with mustard. Season with salt and pepper. Prepare bread crumbs by mixing bread crumbs, parsley, basil, salt and pepper. Dredge chops with flour then dip in beaten eggs. Coat chops with bread crumb mixture. Fry in hot oil over low heat until golden brown.

Serves five to six.

### Chicken Nuggets Cheezee and Barbecue Rumaki

2 c Magnolia Nutri-oil (Palm Olein)
2 boxes Purefoods Chicken Fun Nuggets
5 c cooked rice, cooled
1 c store-bought barbecue sauce
1 bottle Magnolia Cheezee Spread
1 pack Nori, toasted and cut into 3x1-inch strips

Cook chicken nuggets in hot oil until golden brown. Set aside.

Form rice into small rectangular pieces the same size as the nuggets. Spread Cheezee on top of rice then top with a nugget. Wrap with Nori to secure the two pieces together. Do the same with the rest of the nuggets until one box is finished. Do the same with the rest. A second variant may also be done using barbecue sauce in place of Cheezee.

Makes 24 pieces.

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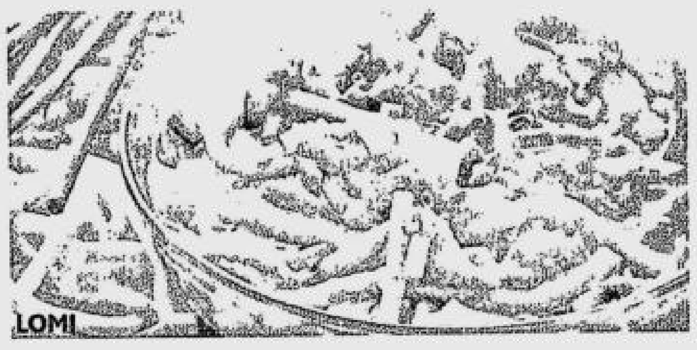


**LOMI**

# 30-minute meals tribute to mothers

CORAL GARDEN RESTAURANT will give free dessert for Moms who dine in May 12-May 20, and a free long-stemmed rose to every mother on May 13.

Coral Garden shares these two 30-minute recipes for Mother's Day.

### Asparagus with Scallops

150 g scallops, cleaned and dried well
¼ tsp minced garlic and ginger
1 small white onion, quartered
250 g asparagus, washed and cut 1½ inch long
3 tbsp corn oil
Salt, white pepper
1/8 c chicken broth

Saute onions, garlic and ginger in hot oil. Add the scallops and cook for one minute.

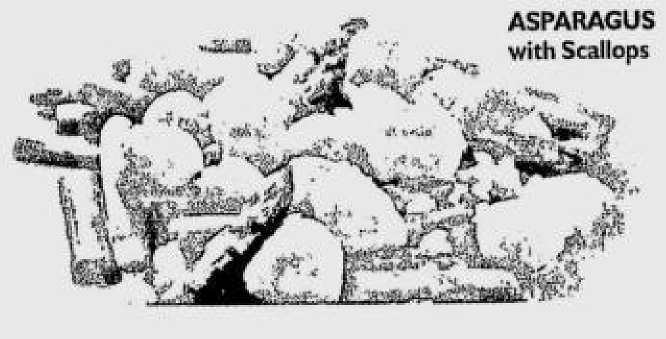
Add asparagus and stir fry for another minute. Add seasoning and broth. Cook for another minute or so, making sure the asparagus is nice and crunchy when served.

### Lomi

150 g miki noodles, boiled and drained
2 eggs, scrambled
3 tbsp corn oil
1 tsp minced garlic
30 g green onion, 1½ inch long
15 g white onion, sliced
30 g small shrimps
50 g pork, sliced
30 g squid, sliced
10 g carrots, julienned
25 g napa cabbage, cut lengthwise
4 c broth
Salt, white pepper
Cornstarch water

Saute garlic, green and white onions in hot oil. Add pork, shrimps and squid. Add the scrambled eggs, carrots and napa cabbage. Season with salt and white pepper then add the broth and miki. Let simmer for 3-5 minutes. Thicken with cornstarch water. Top with chopped green onions.

Coral Garden is at 96 Banawe St., QC, tel. 7110255; and 184-B E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Bagumbayan, QC.



**ASPARAGUS with Scallops**

**HAINANESE** chicken rice was brought to Singapore by Hainanese chefs. But now it is called "Singapore chicken rice" in Hainan.

# Interacting with a Singaporean cook

From page D1

among the recipes, it was the *biko* that was such a hit with the employees in the showroom that he had to set aside some of it for his mother to taste.

Chris and I both agreed that, when going to a new place, a visit to the wet market is a must. The market is the best place to know what ingredients are used in the area and how. For a food writer, the market is the perfect place to do research.

Over here, Chris went to Aranque market in Chinatown where he saw the black chicken called *ulikba*, which has dark meat. He told me that a multi-story building would house the present market.

That just shows that I haven't been to Chinatown for quite a while. I hope the new place will not rob Aranque of its character and atmosphere.

While in Chinatown, Chris went to the Ongpin chocolate factory by following his nose, as I told him to do. Well, the aroma of chocolate beans being roasted and then ground does permeate the air but it also helped that I told him that the shop was on Ongpin Street near the Binondo Church.

The *tsokolate tablea* was one of Chris' must-buys. The other was green tamarind used for *sinigang*. He asked me how it looked and how it was used.

It's a good thing it is summer so tamarind trees are bearing fruit. I chanced on some at the supermarket and bought two packs for him to experiment with, such as the *sinigang na bangus* included in the Philippine chapter.

## Green tamarind

We also discussed that, among Southeast Asian countries, only the Philippines used green tamarind. Others usually used a ball of tamarind paste, brown in color but just as sour.

While there are differences in the cooking of the 10 Asean (Association of Southeast Asian nations) members, the similarities are striking.

The Nyonya birthday mee could have been any of our *pancit* though in the picture it was closer to *pancit palabok*. Tapal from Brunei Darussalam is fermented rice like our *buro* or *balaw balaw*. Cambodian stuffed frogs (*kang-kep baob*) is like the Pampango *betute*. Myanmar's *shwe yin aye* is very much like our *guinomis*, minus the former's glutinous rice.

The flavoring condiment to the noodles was a *sambal*, a mix of chili and *balachan* (shrimp paste). Chris brought the Indonesian version. As the *sambal* was made, we discussed how Southeast Asian countries all had some form of fish sauce and shrimp paste. I told him that the two kinds of *balachan* (one variety darker than the other) he used looked exactly like the Iloilo *guinamos*, a drier *bagoong*.

Chris also found out that there was hardly any red finger pepper here because we only used green ones. In an interaction with workshop participants, we learned that Lolita's at Farmer's Market in Cubao carried many ingredients used in Asian cooking.

Because he was advised that he would appear on television to discuss the book, he decided to cook *bingka* in Singapore then brought it here to compare it with our *bibingka*.

I asked him to visit the Via Mare kitchen and photograph the process of cooking *bibingka* only to be told that an oven was now used instead of the traditional charcoal and clay pot cooker.

Thankfully, the restaurant's catering section still had the original cooker and so Chris was able to document the old way.

The *bingka* is Singapore's version of our cassava *bibingka*. Both use grated fresh cassava but, instead of coconut milk used in the Philippine version, the *bingka* uses grated coconut.

Throughout Chris Tan's stay, our conversation was interspersed with culinary similarities and differences. The best discovery was that the word indicating regret for ordering too much food and not finishing it all was the same in Singapore and the Philippines. "*Sayang!*"

*E-mail the author at pinoyfood04@yahoo.com*

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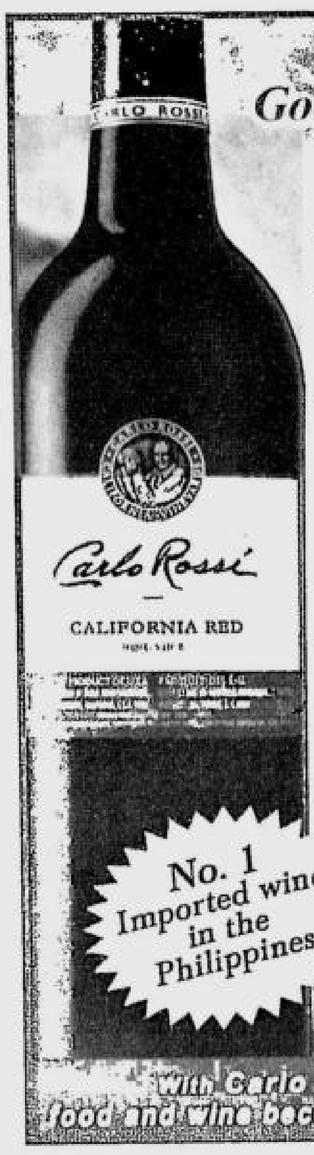

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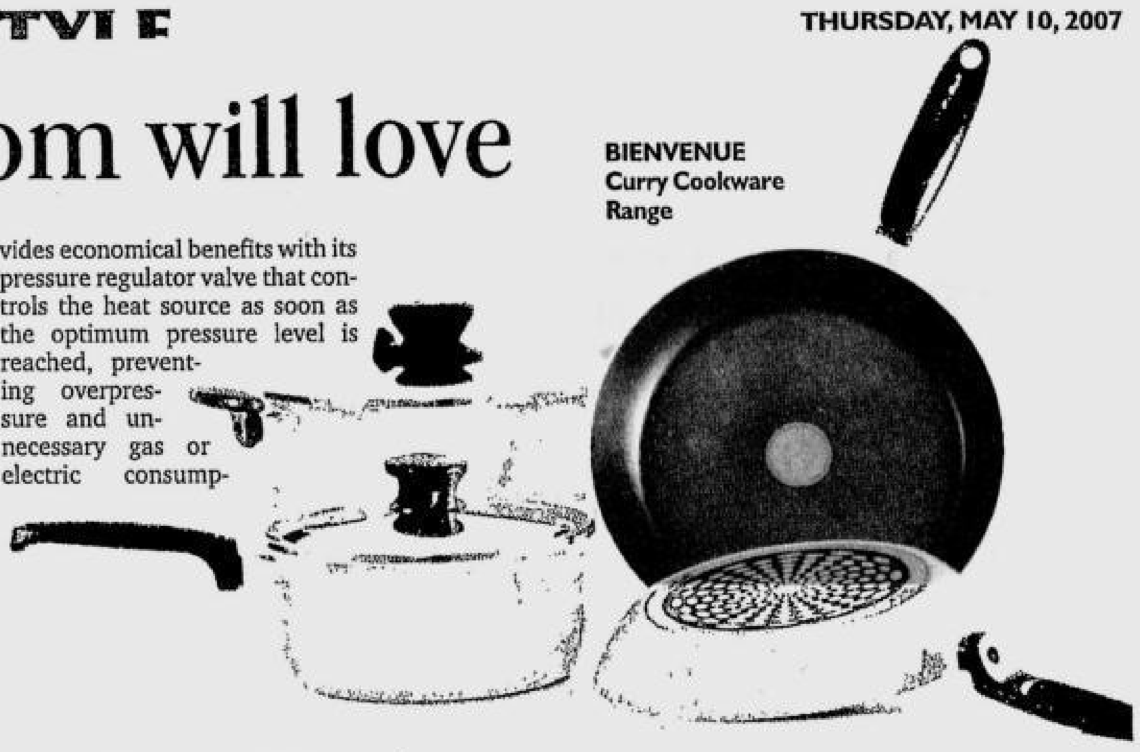
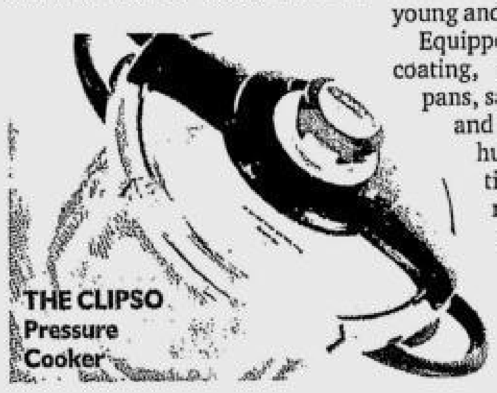
# Mother's Day gifts any mom will love



**BIENVENUE** Curry Cookware Range

THE FIRST NONSTICK FRY PANS are proof enough of this company's leading edge, but for mothers who like to cook, there is more that Tefal has to offer.



**THE CLIPSO** Pressure Cooker

The Bienvenue Curry Cookware Range is perfect for beginners or kitchen novices like young and active moms.

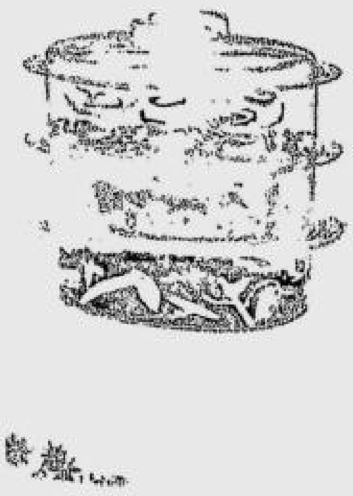
Equipped with four layers of coating, the line includes fry pans, saucepans, chicken fryer and Dutch oven in a curry hue. Built to last a lifetime, the Bienvenue Curry Cookware Range is affordable and durable.

The Clipso Pressure Cooker suits busy career women who are always on the go. Its fast-cooking features give the user more time to attend to other tasks. The cooker is equipped with five unique safety devices to prevent sudden steam release and other inconveniences associated with traditional pressure cookers, and to ensure smooth and easy tenderizing of the toughest of meats in record time.

Apart from tenderizing, the cooker has multi-cooking functions including boiling, steaming, roasting, stewing and thawing. It has a vegetable steaming basket as an added treat.

Clipso Pressure Cooker provides economical benefits with its pressure regulator valve that controls the heat source as soon as the optimum pressure level is reached, preventing overpressure and unnecessary gas or electric consumption.

For health-conscious mothers who are partial to simple, fuss-free healthy cooking, there is Tefal's Ultra Compact Steamer. It has three tiers with dividing trays that can hold as much as six liters of food, making it ultra convenient to prepare family-size batches of steamed fish, choice meats, vegetables and rice without the added calories of butter or cooking oil.

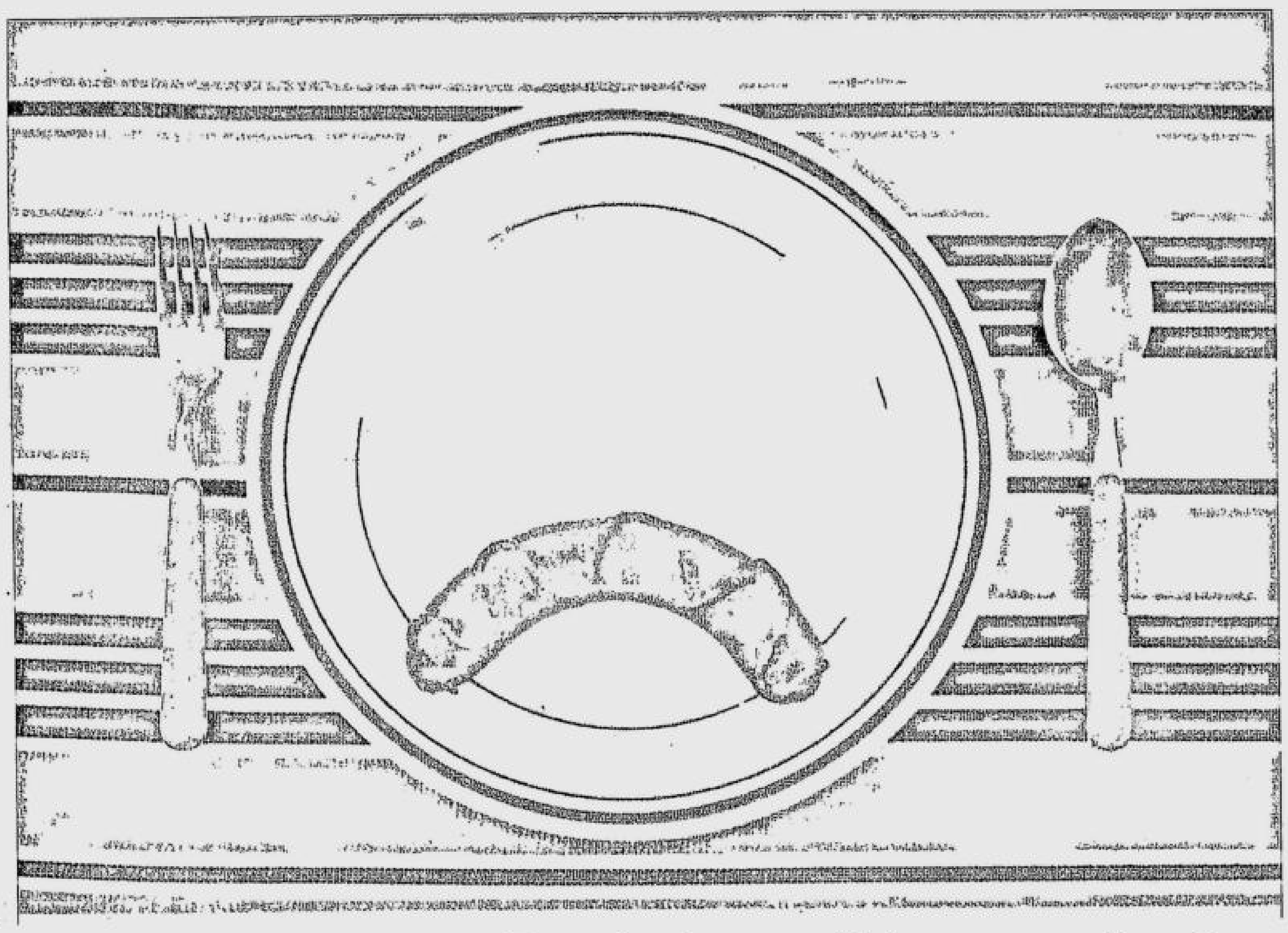


**TEFAL'S Ultra Compact** Steamer.

Other features include a 60-minute timer with a bell. The unit shuts off after the set cooking time has expired. It is also equipped with an integrated egg-rack and a drip tray with side pouring openings.

Juices and drippings are collected in the tray and can be used to flavor soups or gravies. The side openings provide easy access for filling or refilling the water reservoir while the transparent base allows monitoring of the level of water for safe cooking.

Exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corp., Tefal is available in all leading department stores and supermarkets Call 8909703.



Are you happy with what your kids are eating?

Let's face it. Today's combination of sedentary lifestyle and high-fat, fast food diet has created a toxic environment for our children. Nowadays, kids spend more and more time in front of the TV, computer or video console. French fries are becoming a staple meal, as well as fried chicken and tomato-based meals like spaghetti. And sugar-sweetened drinks are squeezing out more nutritious choices such as milk or fruit juice.

The question is, are you confident that your child is getting the right nutrition from all these meals?

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**PAUL** Marco Sison

**RHENEE** Victoria Sy

**JAN** Corazon Viray

# *Young Pinoy cooks apprentice in Florida resort*

THREE YOUNG COOKS, THIS year's top graduates of the American Hospitality Academy (AHA), are now doing their post-training apprenticeship at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort in Florida.

Rhenee Victoria Sy, Jan Corazon Viray and Paul Marco Sison finished the six-month culinary course of AHA, the first American culinary school in the Philippines and the very first branch of the South Carolina-based AHA outside of the United States.

The academy opened on June 19 in Makati with an initial enrollment of 35 students.

Sy received AHA's highest award, "Culinary Excellence." She, a graduate of European studies and business management major in entrepreneurship, worked for a nongovernment organization raising funds for poor children.

Sy also interned at the Philippine Airlines first-class section. She said, after her internship in the United States, she would want to teach children how to cook.

Viray and Sison said the six-month course at AHA was amazing and fun. Viray did a two-month internship at the Hyatt Hotel in Manila.

The six-month AHA training includes two months of internship in any hotel in Manila. Afterwards, trainees are sent on an eight-month internship in Florida.

Viray specializes in baking. Sison, who first dreamed of becoming a priest and who finished a four-year computer course, wants to work in a hotel in Manila after his Florida internship.

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**MESSAGE TO MOM**

Dominique Cojuangco, right, and KC Concepcion have messages to their famous mothers in the May issue of Seventeen magazine. From KC to Sharon Cuneta: "Spend a couple of days away in peace, sans the company of assistants, DVDs or audio books, to allow yourself to really re-connect, relax and pray." From Dominique to Gretchen Barretto: "Mom, stay the same, because you're fine just the way you are."

# Canadian expert hails 'exciting' RP cinema

TAKE FIVE

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

CAMERON BAILEY ROMY HOMILLADA

FOR THIS RECENT VISITOR, MANILA WAS A blast.

"I'm glad to be here at the beginning of what looks like an ... exciting period of cinema," said Cameron Bailey, one of six international programmers of the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), who was in the country for the first time last week to watch local movies and meet with filmmakers.

Bailey has worked with TIFF for the past 12 years.

He went on a six-day "fishing expedition" in Manila, in search of possible Pinoy entries to TIFF 2007. Last year, he picked Mel Chionglo's "Twilight Dancers" and Jeffrey Jeturian's "Kubrador."

## Five films

Bailey doesn't claim to know everything about Philippine cinema.

He considers David Overby, the programmer best known for bringing Lino Brocka's "Macho Dancer" to TIFF, as his mentor.

"Overby was an advocate of Filipino movies. He introduced me to some of the greats—Brocka, Mike de Leon and Ishmael Bernal," he told INQUIRER Entertainment on Monday. "But I have a lot of catching up to do."

Thus, he met with Cinemalaya and Cinema One directors, as well as members of the Independent Filmmakers Cooperative. He also visited the set of "Tirador," Brillante Mendoza's latest movie, in Mandaluyong. "That was amazing," he said.

Bailey watched five films in all and received "a stack of DVDs" from different direc-

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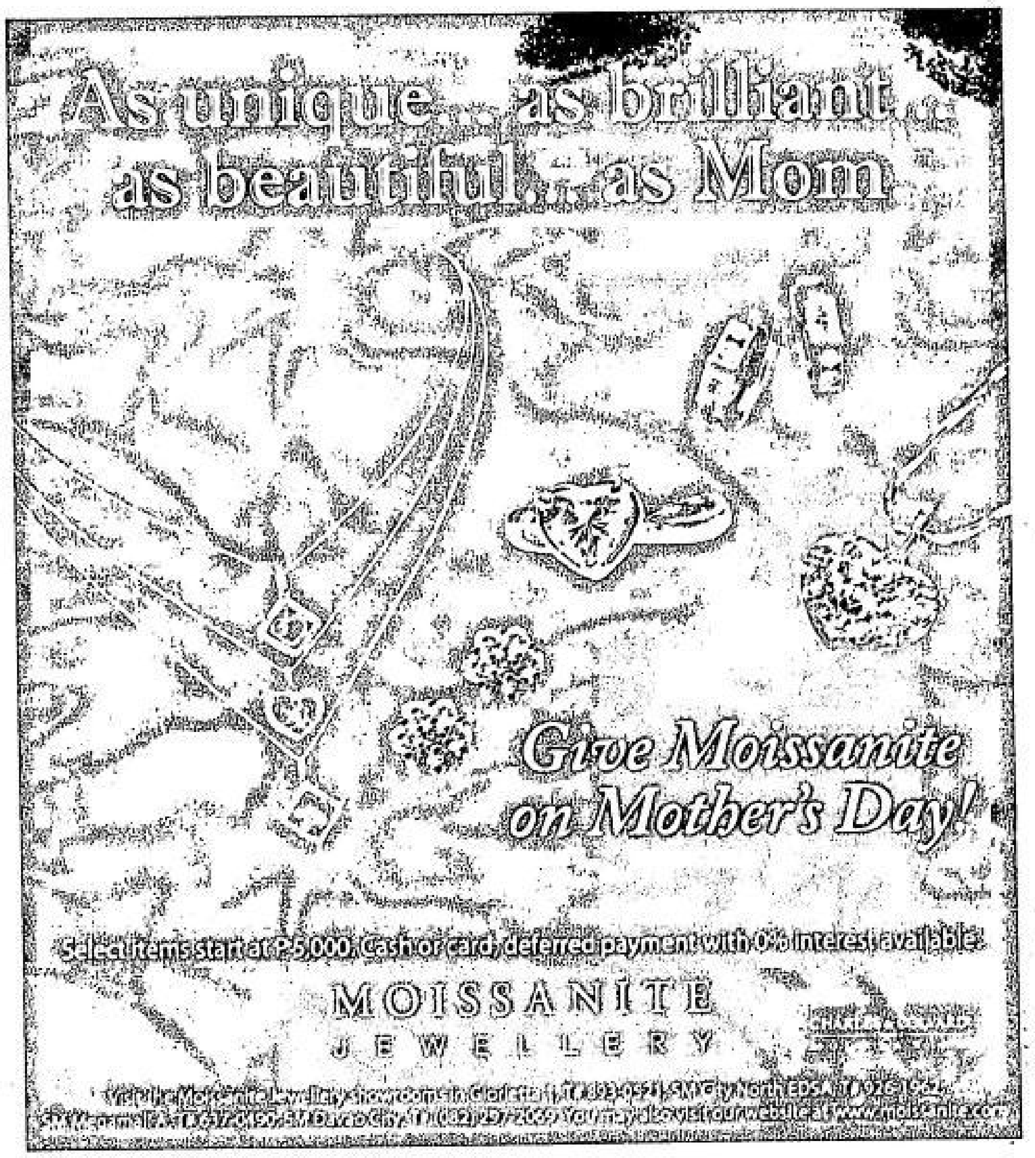

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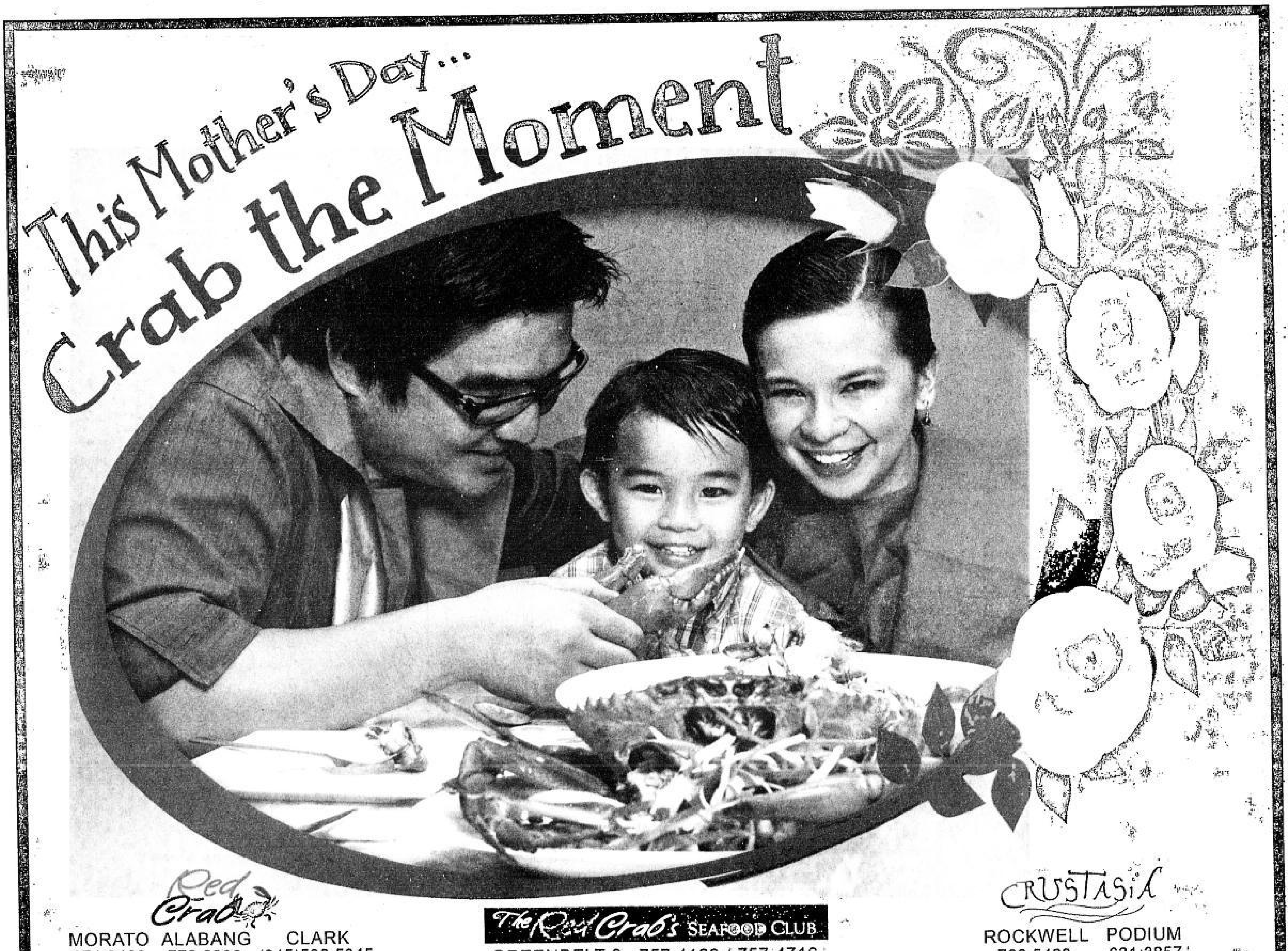

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12:20 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40

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1 SPIDER-MAN 3 10:20 1:10 4:10 7:05 10:00
2 28 WEEKS LATER
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 THE CONDEMNED
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 LUCKY YOU

### METRO EAST
Ticket Price: P110 / 100 682-8193 / 682-8199

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
12:30 3:10 5:50 8:30

2 SPIDER-MAN 3
1:30 4:10 6:50 9:30

3 PERFECT STRANGER

4 THE CONDEMNED

5 SPIDER-MAN 3
12:00 2:40 5:20 8:00

6 SPIDER-MAN 3
3:40 6:20 9:00

7 WILD HOGS

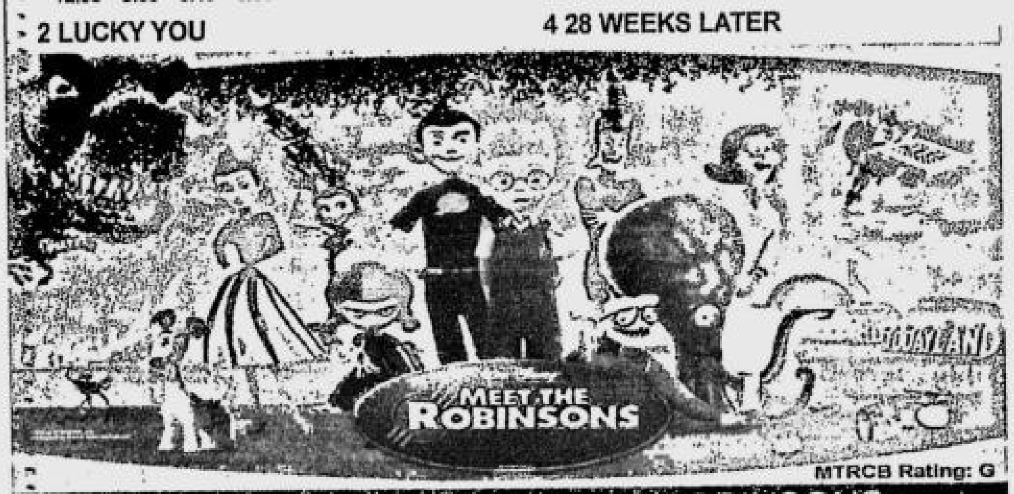
8 28 WEEKS LATER

### NOVALICHES
Ticket Price: P101 / 91 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 28 WEEKS LATER
6 THE CONDEMNED

### PIONEER
Ticket Price: P110 687-5378

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
12:50 3:30 6:10 8:50
2 LUCKY YOU
3 THE CONDEMNED
4 28 WEEKS LATER



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3 GRAY MATTERS
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 NORBIT

### DASMARIÑAS
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2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 FIREHOUSE DOG
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SHOOTER

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2 SHOOTER
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2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SHOOTER
4 FIREHOUSE DOG
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2 SPIDER-MAN 3
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4 SHOOTER
5 GRAY MATTERS
6 SPIDER-MAN 3

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2 ROCKY BALBOA / SPIDER-MAN 3
3 RESERVE
4 THE REAPING
5 NORBIT
6 PREMONITION

### ILOILO
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1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 THE REAPING
3 SHOOTER
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 THE LAST MIMZY
6 ROCKY BALBOA

---

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## MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

### SHANG CINEPLEX
1 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN 3
2 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN 3
3 (DOLBY) 28 WEEKS LATER
4 (DOLBY) LUCKY YOU
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN 3

### CINEMA 2000
**Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati**
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 28 WEEKS LATER
4 CONDEMNED

### starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) CONDEMNED
5 RESERVED

### metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8604286, 5433994
1 THE SHOOTER
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 28 WEEKS LATER

### THEATRES
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 SUNSHINE

### PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
SPIDER-MAN-3
SPIDER-MAN-3
RESRVED
RESRVED

### Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 28 WEEKS LATER
5 THE CONDEMNED
6 LUCKY YOU
7 SPIDER-MAN-3
8 THE REAPING
9 WILD HOGS
10 PERFECT STRANGER

### Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) THE CONDEMNED
2 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN-3
3 (DOLBY) 28 WEEKS LATER
4 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN-3

### SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 28 WEEKS LATER
4 LUCKY YOU
5 THE CONDEMNED

### THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 ZOMBIES
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 RESERVED

### Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 PAN'S LABYRINTH

### Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)-(4449346)
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3

### Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 THE CHANTING
4 SPIDER-MAN-3

### Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3

### EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) LUCKY YOU
2 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN-3
3 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN-3
4 (DOLBY) 28 WEEKS LATER

### CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7363
1 SUNSHINE
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4

**Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall**
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

**Cinema 2000 Cinemagix**
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 TURISTAS
3 SPIDER-MAN-3

**Cinema 2000 Metrotown**
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 ROCKY BALBOA
2 THE CHANTING
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 SPIDER-MAN-3

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 THE REAPING
3 SPIDER-MAN-3

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SPIDER-MAN-3

### Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 THE HILLS HAVE EYES
2 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

### Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 MASAHISTA
3 BIGLANG LIKO
4 RUMBLE BOYS

### Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 BASA SA DAGAT
3 SUNSHINE
4 KATAS
5 SATANICA

### Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 THE LAST MIMZY
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 SUNSHINE
4 SPIDER-MAN-3

### Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 SATANICA

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

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# Canadian expert . . .

From page E1

tors.

TIFF runs from Sept. 6 to 15. The final lineup will be announced in July, he said.

### Next to Cannes

One of the "top events in the world," TIFF is "second only to Cannes in terms of high-profile pics, stars and market activity,"

---

## POWER PLANT CINEMA
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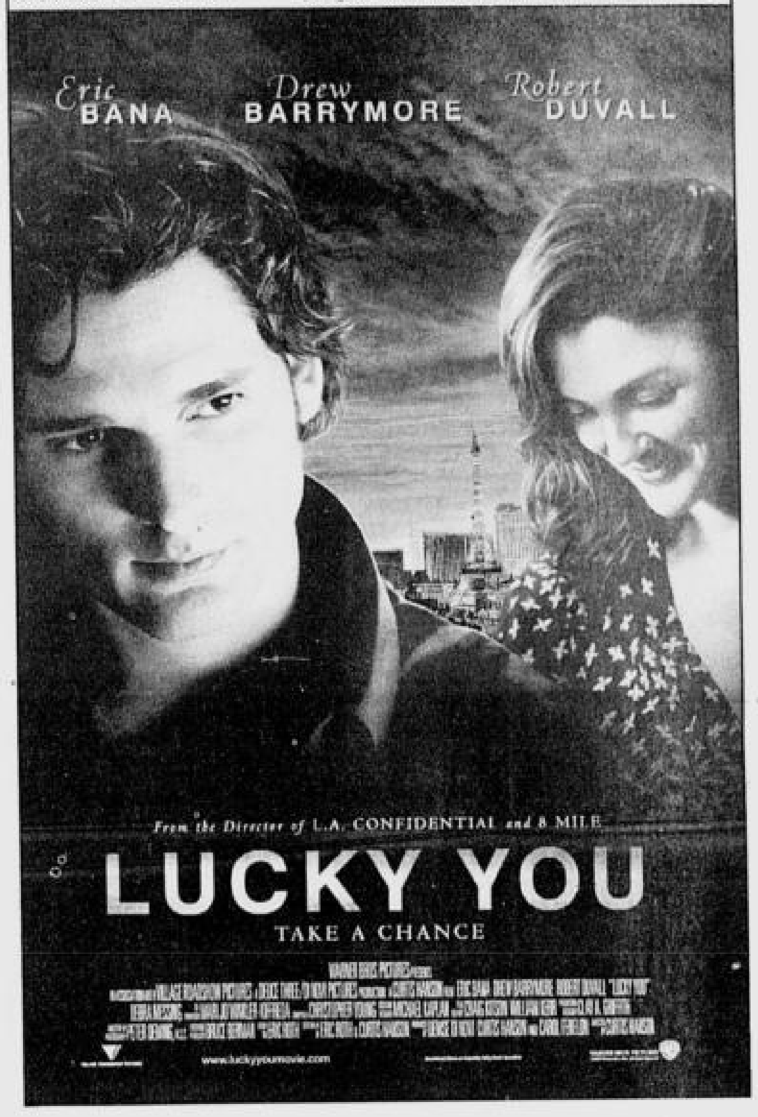
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 28 WEEKS LATER<br>R13<br>1:40,3:50,6:00,<br>8:10,10:20 | SPIDER-MAN 3<br>G<br>12:40,3:40,6:40,9:40 | SPIDER-MAN 3<br>G<br>11:50,2:50,5:50,8:50 |
| LUCKY YOU<br>PG13<br>2:45,5:20,7:55,10:30 | THE CONDEMNED<br>R13<br>12:50,3:15,5:40,<br>8:05,10:30 | SPIDER-MAN 3<br>G<br>1:30,4:30,7:30,10:30 |

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

## NOW SHOWING!
MTRCB RATING PG-13



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Spend P500 in any Eastwood City establishment (single receipt) from May 11 to 13, 2007 and get a chance to **pick a special prize** from Eastwood City

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | LUCKY YOU<br>2:55, 5:40, 8:25, 11:00<br>PG-13 | |
| 2 | SPIDER-MAN 3<br>1:00, 4:10, 7:20, 10:30<br>G | |
| 3 | SPIDER-MAN 3<br>1:30, 4:40, 7:50, 11:00<br>G | |
| 4 | 28 WEEKS LATER<br>1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00<br>R-13 | |

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE according to industry bible Variety magazine. Critic Roger Ebert concurs: "Cannes is still larger, [but] Toronto is more useful and important."

Bailey reported, "TIFF posted $50 million in deals last year."

On Monday night, Bailey left Manila and proceeded to Johannesburg in South Africa, then Cannes in France, Pakistan and India. "My last stop is at the Seattle International Film Festival, where I'll be a juror," he said.

**What brought you to the Philippines?**

I met Khavn de la Cruz when he screened some of his short films in Rotterdam. Internationally, Khavn, Lav Diaz, John Torres and Raya Martin are well-known. I wanted to get a fuller picture of the local digital scene here.

**What did you see?**

Digital technology is available to the whole world, but not everybody knows what to do with them. In many other countries, people use cheap technology to duplicate already existing film forms. In the Philippines, I noticed that technology is liberating filmmakers from genre constraints. They're making more personal films. That's not happening elsewhere.

**What do you think led to that?**

Partly, it's institutional. There are bodies (like Cinemalaya, Cinema One, Cinemanila) encouraging filmmakers to create new works that need not fulfill market demands. [And] the Filipino filmmakers I've met are *au courant* with what is going on in international art cinema.

**What is Toronto looking for?**

Our audiences are very sophisticated and global in their outlook. They are curious to see another part of the world and they'll readily applaud new talent. When Gina Pareño attended the festival last year, she was mobbed. They were cheering and crying while watching "Kubrador."

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|---|---|---|---|
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| CINEMA 2 | 28 WEEKS LATER | 10:50 , 1:05 , 3:20<br>5:35 , 7:50 , 10:10 | R-13 |

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

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NOW SHOWING

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CINEMA 3 | LUCKY YOU | 11:20 , 2:10 , 5:00<br>7:50 , 10:35 | PG-13 |
| CINEMA 4 | SPIDERMAN 3 | 11:35 , 2:25 , 5:15<br>8:05 , 10:50 | GP |
| CINEMA 5 | SPIDERMAN 3 | 11:00 , 1:50 , 4:40<br>7:30 , 10:20 | GP |

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| May 11 & 12 , 2007 | Rock the Vote " The Repeat " | 8:00 PM |
| May 18 , 2007 | CHRISTIAN BAUTISTA | 8:00 PM |
| May 19 & 26 , 2007 | OGIE ALCASID & SITTI | 8:00 PM |
| June 15 & 16 , 2007 | Rico J. Puno & Mitch Valdez | 8:00 PM |

TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| EVERY MONDAY | DANCE NIGHT | 7:00 PM |
| May 31 , 2007 | RJ Jimenez | 8:30 PM |
| May 11 , 18 , 25 , 2007 | Drag - Ons | 9:00 PM |
| JUNE 15 , 2007 | Champion of the World (Jed Madela) | 8:30 PM |

FOR INQUIRIES PLS. CALL 722-4532 LOC 116

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Gateway CINEPLEX*10
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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| SPIDERMAN 3<br>11:40 / 12:40 / 1:10 / 1:35 / 2:10 / 2:35<br>3:35 / 4:05 / 4:30 / 5:05 / 5:30 / 6:30 / 7:00<br>7:25 / 8:00 / 8:25 / 9:25 / 9:55 / 10:20 | | CONDEMNED<br>1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30<br>LUCKY YOU<br>12:50 / 3:40 / 6:30 / 9:20 | Globe PLATINUM CINEMA |
| DOLBY DIGITAL-EX | 28 WEEKS LATER<br>1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50 | PERFECT STRANGER<br>1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40 | SPIDERMAN 3<br>12:15 / 3:10 / 6:05 / 9:00 |

ALIMALL 5

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 28 WEEKS LATER<br>12:05 / 2:15 / 4:25 / 6:35 / 8:45 | 2 | SHOOTER<br>12:35 / 3:10 / 5:45 / 8:20 | 3 | SPIDERMAN 3<br>12:00 / 2:40 / 5:20 / 8:00 |
| 4 | ANG CUTE NG INA MO<br>12:30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6.30 / 8:30 | 5 | CONDEMNED<br>12:10 / 2:50 / 5:30 / 8:10 | | DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS |

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

ARANETA COLISEUM
www.aranetacoliseum.com

| PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE | PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE |
|---|---|
| MAY 13, 2007 Sunday | MAY 16, 2007 Wednesday |
| 4:05 - Coca- Cola vs. Alaska 6:20 - Purefoods vs. Ginebra | 4:35 - Sta Lucia vs. Welcoat 7:20 - Talk N Text vs. Air 21 |

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls Love mall!

AT THE CINEMAS
THX
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Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification please call 729 7777

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| G1 GLORIETTA 1 | 1 28 WEEKS LATER | 2 SPIDER-MAN 3 | 3 THE CONDEMNED | 4 SPIDER-MAN 3 |
| G4 GLORIETTA 4 | 1 SPIDER-MAN 3 | 2 LUCKY YOU | 3 THX SPIDER-MAN 3 GUARANTEED SEATS | |
| | 4 PERFECT STRANGERS | 5 THE CONDEMNED | 6 SPIDER-MAN 3 | 7 28 WEEKS LATER |
| GB1 GREENBELT 1 | 1 LUCKY YOU | 2 SPIDER-MAN 3 | | |
| GB3 GREENBELT 3 | 1 THX SPIDER-MAN 3 GUARANTEED SEATS | 2 THX SPIDER-MAN 3 GUARANTEED SEATS | | |
| | 3 28 WEEKS LATER GUARANTEED SEATS | 4 LUCKY YOU GUARANTEED SEATS | 5 SPIDER-MAN 3 GUARANTEED SEATS | |
| ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER | 1 THX SPIDER-MAN 3 GUARANTEED SEATS | 2 SPIDER-MAN 3 | | |
| | 3 LUCKY YOU | 4 THE CONDEMNED | 5 28 WEEKS LATER | |
| ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU | 1 SPIDER-MAN 3 | 2 SPIDER-MAN 3 | 3 | 4 GRAY MATTERS |
| M2 MARKET! MARKET! | 1 SPIDER-MAN 3 | 2 LUCKY YOU | | |
| | 3 28 WEEKS LATER | 4 THE CONDEMNED | 5 SPIDER-MAN 3 | |

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 9pm
Greenbelt - 757 4853; from 11am to 9pm
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

| GLORIETTA | ALABANG TOWN CENTER |
|---|---|
| Laguna Expo<br>May 7 to 13, 2007 | One Shot Encounter w/ NIGEL BARKER<br>May 11, 2007 - 6PM |
| AYALA CENTER CEBU | MARKET! MARKET! |
| Nesvita Sampling Booth at Paseos<br>May 11 & 12, 2007 | Strawberry Shortcake & Friends:<br>The Big Berry Bake Off<br>May 11 to 13, 2007 |

| | |
|---|---|
| GREENBELT | One Shot Encounter w/ NIGEL BARKER<br>May 10, 2007, 7PM - Greenbelt 3 Park |
| Greenbelt Onstage | ONSTAGE - The perfect spot for concerts, stage plays & coporate events is now accepting bookings for May to July 2007<br>For bookings, pls. call 752-7862 or 757-3861 |
| Ayala MUSEUM | CHINESE DIASPORA: Art Streams from the Mainland (six shows)<br>Ongoing until May 27, 2007<br>For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org |

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Per DTI Permit No. 1254 Series of 2007.

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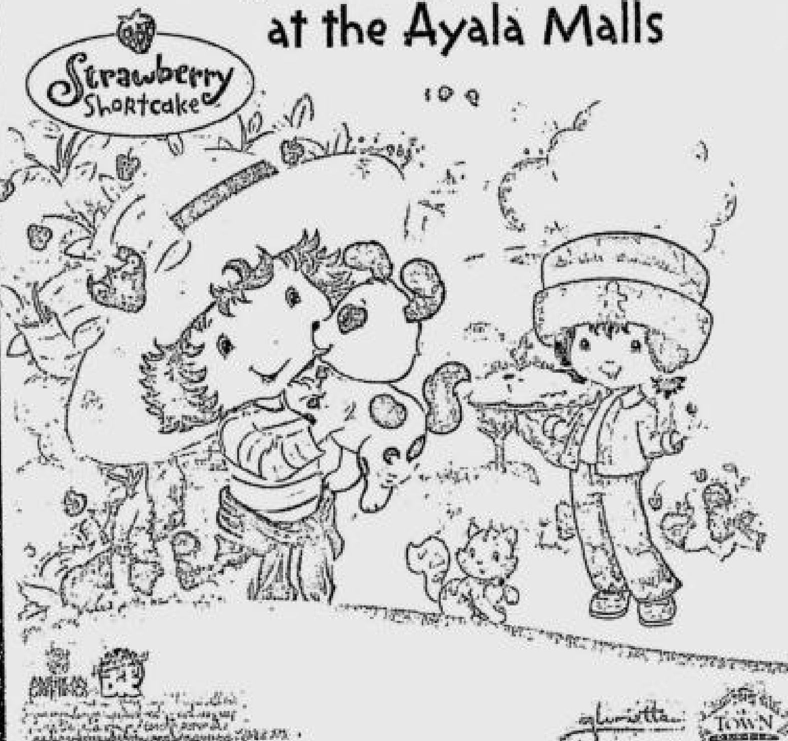
Activity Center
May 3, 6pm
May 4, 3pm & 6pm
May 5 & 6, 11:30am , 3pm & 6pm

Market! Market!
Activity Center
May 11-13
11am , 3pm & 6pm

Alabang Town Center
Activity Center
May 18-20
11am , 3pm & 6pm

TriNoma
Activity Center
May 25-27
11am , 3pm & 6pm

Ayala Center Cebu
Activity Center
June 1-3
1pm , 4pm & 6:30pm



glorietta ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma
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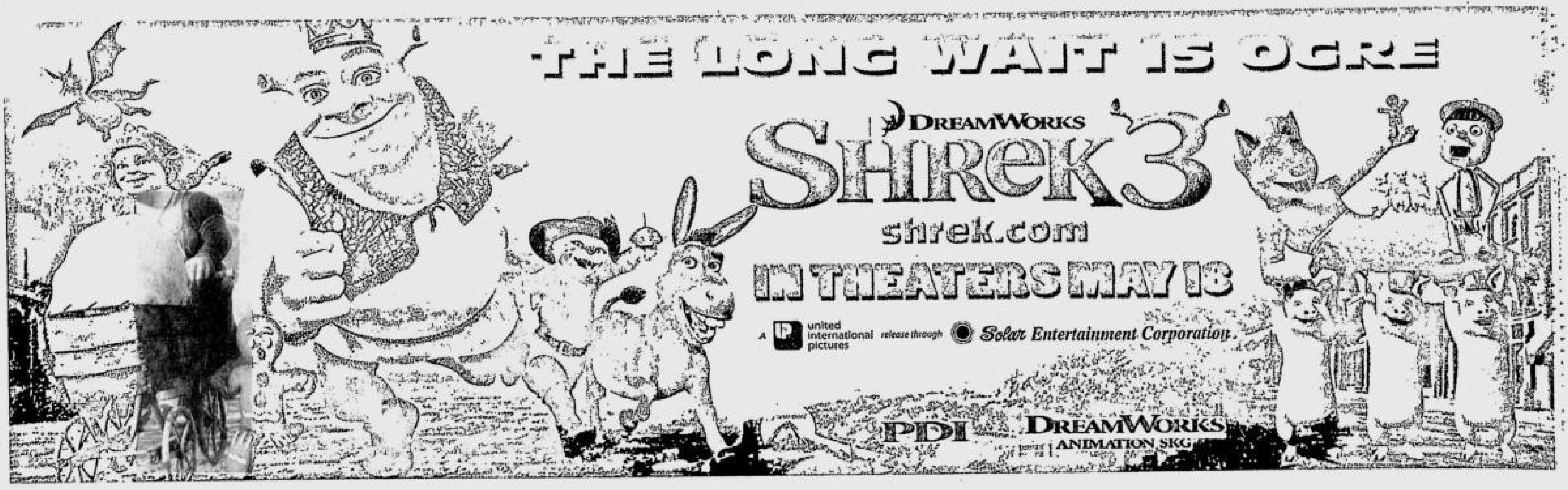
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# 'Spider-Man 3' rewrites rules for movie sequels

**VIEWFINDER**

*Nestor U. Torre*

SEQUELS ARE SAID TO BE "SAFE" PRODUCTIONS to bankroll, because they are much easier to "sell" to the movie-going public than new material. On the other hand, if a sequel is not as interesting as its original film, it can quickly lose its appeal and bomb at the tills.

Now comes "Spider-Man 3," a sequel so successful that it bids fair to rewrite the rules for future follow-up productions of original hits.

Why? First of all, the third "Spider-Man" movie has radically upped the ante in terms of budget. Remember when $100 million was regarded as a big budget for prospective Hollywood blockbusters? And "Titanic's" $20-million budget set the high mark for the biggest movies?

Well, all that's in the penny-pinching past, because the budget for "Spiderman 3" is reported to have hit $400 million!

Where did those gazillions of dollars go? Star value doesn't come cheap, especially after the success of the first two "Spider-Man" movies upped the box-office clout and financial ante of **Tobey Maguire** and **Kirsten Dunst**.

## Escalating fees

In viewers' minds, Maguire and Dunst are so closely identified with their screen characters that for Peter Parker and Mary Jane Watson to be played by other actors would be unthinkable.

To keep the popular screen tandem attached to the profitable film franchise, the production has to keep up with their escalating talent fees as they rise to heady, stratospheric heights.

But most of that $400-million windfall has expectedly gone to finance the movie's extravagant production values, especially its exciting special effects. All those thrilling flying scenes, chase sequences and magical transformations cost a bundle to stage or digitally create, thus the huge expenditure for them to come out as believably and compellingly as they do.

We figure that a particularly daunting challenge for the film's visualizers was the character called the Sandman, who went from human form to bits of sand, and back again.

## Worldwide hit

The risk was great that his scenes would come off poorly and thus irritate rather than excite viewers, but the movie's top-of-the-line digital dervishes made sure that didn't happen.

As a result, the film has become a major hit worldwide, with some show biz prognosticators predicting that it will end up grossing more than $1 billion. Well, it pretty much has to, since its $400-million budget means that the film has to make at least $800 million just to break even.

## Film earnings

Given the film's spectacular showing to date, its makers can perhaps be forgiven for gloating over its stupendous grosses. In the Philippines, however, we hope that they will opt to be more temperate. On the movie's opening day here, it grosses something like P58 million, which is more than what some local movies gross during their entire run!

Since the local movie industry is experiencing dire times, it really isn't cricket for foreign blockbusters to boast about their huge box-office figures.

## Viewing options

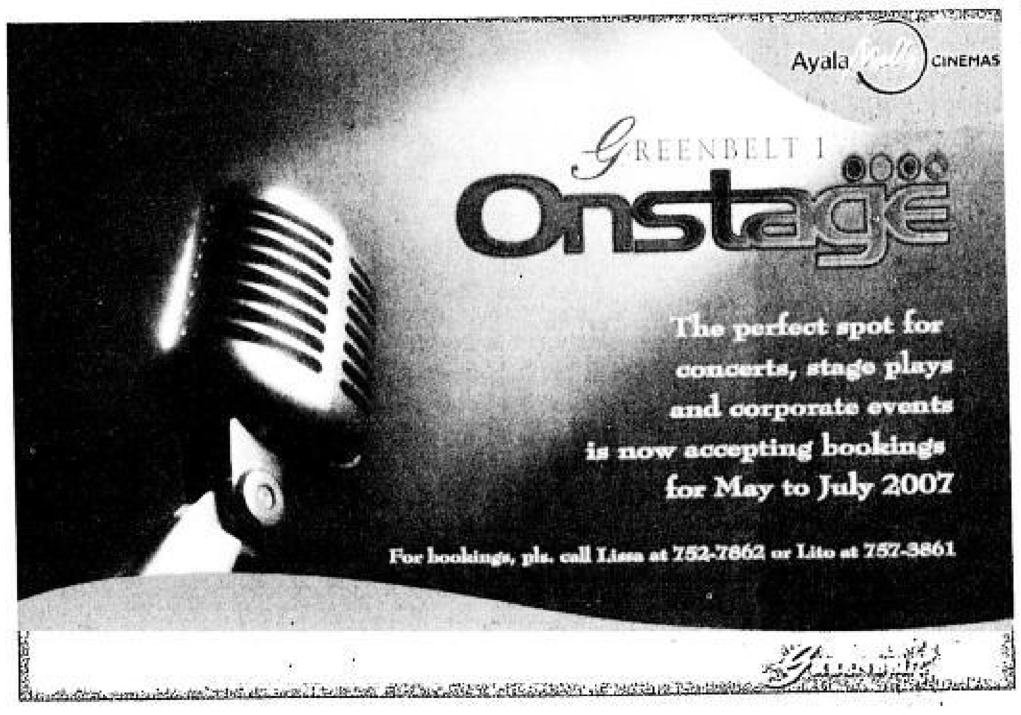
Finally, it's also unfair to moviegoers that "S3" is showing on more than 90 percent of local screens on its opening week.

Moviegoers have the right to be offered a wide choice of viewing options, so for those "options" to be pretty much limited to a "choice" between "S3," "S3" and "S3" is a disservice to the moviegoers whom all producers, distributors and theater owners profess to love to bits.

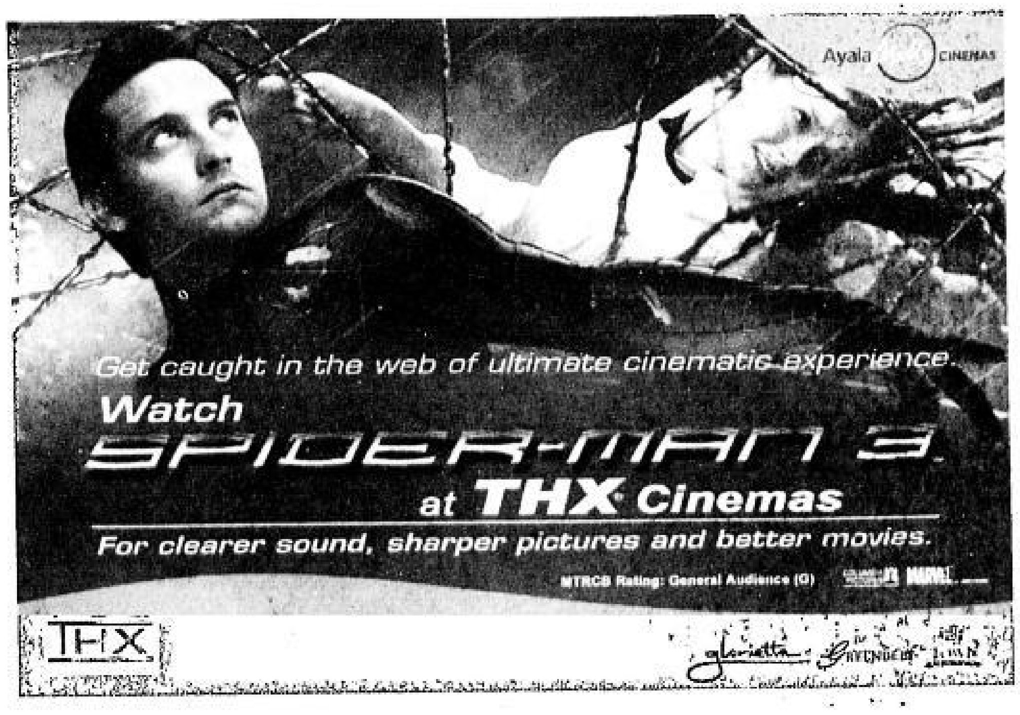
Sure, it's "only business," and "making hay while the sun shines," and "maximizing the initial impact" of the "monster" hit, but moviegoers still end up being pretty much optioned out.

MTRCB RATING ▸ R-13 | STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP.
NOW SHOWING
NO RULES
NO MERCY
NO SURRENDER
FIGHT TO THE DEATH
FROM THE PRODUCERS OF "THE MARINE"
WORLD WRESTLING ENTERTAINMENT (WWE) PRESENTS
STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN
THE CONDEMNED

A Seat fit for the Li'l King
Introducing the Ayala Malls Cinemas **BOOSTER BUDDY**.
Its two-sided design provides height options for children of different ages.
It has a cup and candy holder.
It's odorless, and has no sharp corners.
Its lightweight design allows children to carry their own seat.
Ayala Malls CINEMAS



Ayala Malls CINEMAS
GREENBELT 1
Onstage
The perfect spot for concerts, stage plays and corporate events is now accepting bookings for May to July 2007
For bookings, pls. call Lissa at 752-7862 or Lito at 757-3861



Ayala Malls CINEMAS
Get caught in the web of ultimate cinematic experience.
Watch SPIDER-MAN 3 at THX Cinemas
For clearer sound, sharper pictures and better movies.
MTRCB Rating: General Audience (G)
THX
glorietta

SM CINEMA
SHARE A MOVIE WITH A LOVED ONE
movietime SHOWTIME
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*Powered by WWW.YEHEY.COM
Your life as a movie
BIG MOVIES • BIG STARS • BIG SHOWS • BIG EVENTS

THE GREATEST BATTLE LIES WITHIN.
www.sonypictures.com.ph
SPIDER-MAN 3
NOW SHOWING NATIONWIDE
SM CINEMA · MALL OF ASIA CINEMAS · THE PODIUM CINEMA
AND IN ENHANCED PICTURE AND SOUND ON THE GIANT IMAX SCREEN AT
SAN MIGUEL Coca-Cola IMAX THEATRE
COMPLEMENT YOUR MOVIE WATCHING WITH THE SPIDER-MAN 3 MOVIE MEAL
AVAILABLE AT ALL SM CINEMA SNACK BARS NATIONWIDE
*MOVIE MEAL CONSISTS OF POPCORN, HOTDOG SANDWICH AND DRINK. PRICE MAY VARY PER BRANCH.
MTRCB RATING: G (ALL AGES ADMITTED)

METRO MANILA

**SM MALL OF ASIA** 556-0242
SAN MIGUEL Coca-Cola IMAX THEATRE
SPIDER-MAN 3
10:30AM 1:30PM 4:30PM 7:30PM 10:30PM
Admission Prices: P 300 (Before 5 p.m., Mon-Thu)
P 350 (After 5 p.m., Mon-Thu; Whole Day, Fri-Sun, Holidays)
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 28 WEEKS LATER
5 LUCKY YOU
6 CONDEMNED
PREMIERE CINEMA
SPIDER-MAN 3
CENTERSTAGE
SPIDER-MAN 3
THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
SPIDER-MAN 3
CINEMA 2
SPIDER-MAN 3
633-8976

**SM NORTH EDSA** 929-5452
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 SPIDER-MAN 3
8 SPIDER-MAN 3
9 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
10 LUCKY YOU
11 CONDEMNED
12 28 WEEKS LATER

**SM MEGACINEMA** 633-1901
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 28 WEEKS LATER
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 CONDEMNED
7 SPIDER-MAN 3
8 LUCKY YOU
9 SPIDER-MAN 3
10 SPIDER-MAN 3
11 SPIDER-MAN 3
12 THE SHOOTER

**SM CITY FAIRVIEW** 935-0749
WILD HOGS
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 CONDEMNED
7 28 WEEKS LATER
8 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
9 SPIDER-MAN 3
10 SPIDER-MAN 3
11 PAN'S LABYRINTH
12 THE SHOOTER

**SM CITY STA. MESA** 716-1416
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
7 28 WEEKS LATER
8 PAN'S LABYRINTH
9 CONDEMNED
10 THE SHOOTER

**SM CITY SAN LAZARO** 786-2488
1 CONDEMNED
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3

**SM SOUTHMALL** 806-6888
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 CONDEMNED
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 LUCKY YOU
8 28 WEEKS LATER
9 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

**SM CITY BICUTAN** 776-3055
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 CONDEMNED
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

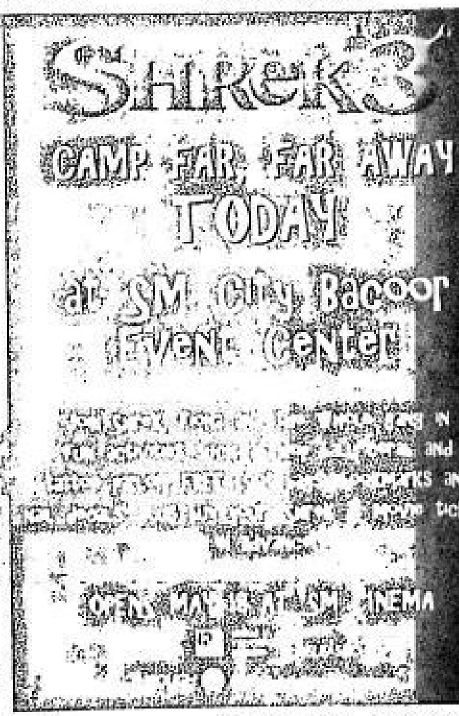
**SM CITY MANILA** 523-9240
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 LUCKY YOU
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 28 WEEKS LATER
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 CONDEMNED
8 SPIDER-MAN 3
9 SPIDER-MAN 3
10 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
11 PAN'S LABYRINTH
12 THE SHOOTER

**SM CITY DASMARIÑAS** (046)4323201-04
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 PREMONITION
3 THE SHOOTER
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

**SM VALENZUELA** 293-3917
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 PAN'S LABYRINTH
4 FIREHOUSE DOG

**SM CITY SUCAT** 829-4975
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 CONDEMNED

SHREK 3
COMING SOON



SHREK 3
CAMP FAR FAR AWAY
TODAY
at SM City Bacoor Event Center

**SM CITY BACOOR** (046)417-3868
1 CONDEMNED
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
8 SPIDER-MAN 3

**SM CITY CLARK** (045)625-5844-45
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 GRAY MATTERS
5 THE SHOOTER
6 THE LAST MIMZY

**SM CITY MARILAO** (044)0332013-17
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

LUZON

**SM CITY BATANGAS** 885-6401-04
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SUNSHINE
4 PREMONITION

**SM CITY PAMPANGA** (045)0637681-85
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 THE SHOOTER
5 THE LAST MIMZY
6 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

**SM CIY LIPA** (043) 784-0187
1 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SUNSHINE

**SM CITY LUCENA** (042)7108977-80
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 PREMONITION
4 THE REAPING

**SM CITY BAGUIO** (074)6197838-39
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 THE SHOOTER
3 ROCKY BALBOA
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

**SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO** (046)474-3160
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 LUCKY YOU
4 28 WEEKS LATER

**SM CITY STA. ROSA** (049)5340811
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 PREMONITION
3 THE SHOOTER
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

VISAYAS MINDANAO

**SM CITY DAVAO** (082)2976998
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 THE SHOOTER
3 PREMONITION
4 TURISTAS
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3

**SM CITY CAGAYAN** (088)859-2884
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 MISS POTTER
4 THE REAPING

**SM CITY ILOILO** (033)3209422
1 THE LAST MIMZY
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 THE SHOOTER
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 THE REAPING
7 RESERVED
8 GRAY MATTERS

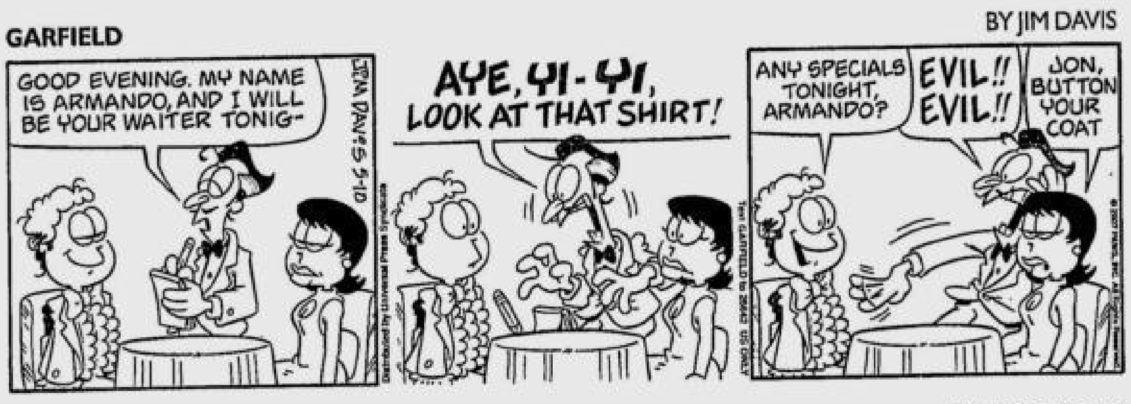
**SM CITY CEBU** (032)231-3876
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 THE SHOOTER
4 GRAY MATTERS
5 TURISTAS
6 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
7 SPIDER-MAN 3
8 SPIDER-MAN 3

**SM CITY BACOLOD** (034) 708 1010
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 PREMONITION
4 THE REAPING

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

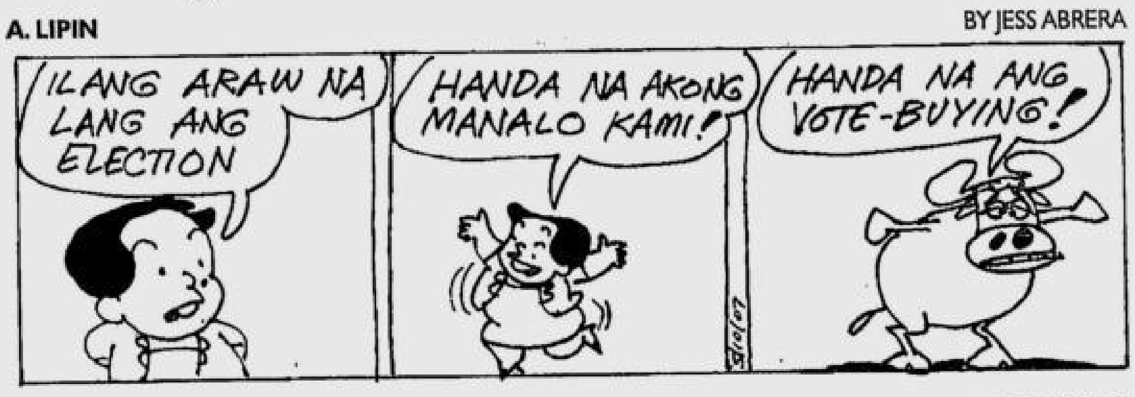
**GARFIELD**

BY JIM DAVIS


GOOD EVENING. MY NAME IS ARMANDO, AND I WILL BE YOUR WAITER TONIG-
JIM DAVIS 5-10
AYE, YI-YI, LOOK AT THAT SHIRT!
ANY SPECIALS TONIGHT, ARMANDO?
EVIL!! EVIL!!
JON, BUTTON YOUR COAT

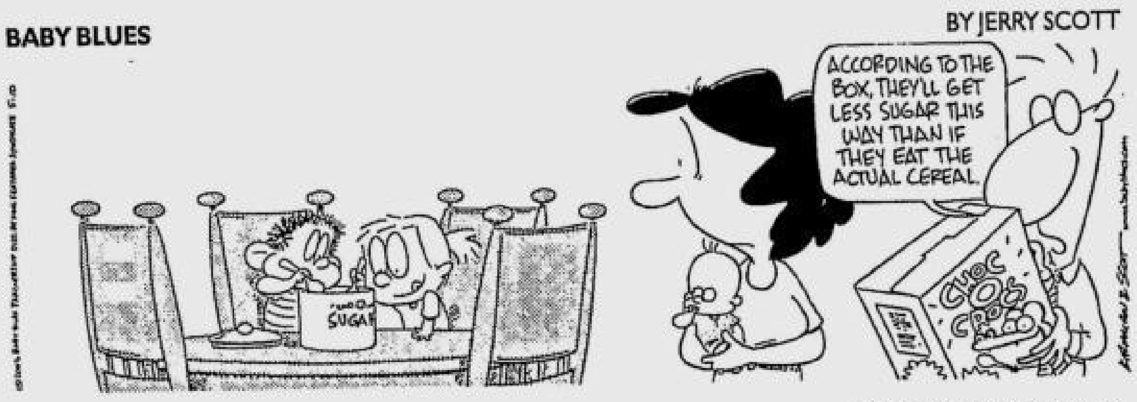
**A. LIPIN**

BY JESS ABRERA


ILANG ARAW NA LANG ANG ELECTION
HANDA NA AKONG MANALO KAMI!
HANDA NA ANG VOTE-BUYING!
5/10/07

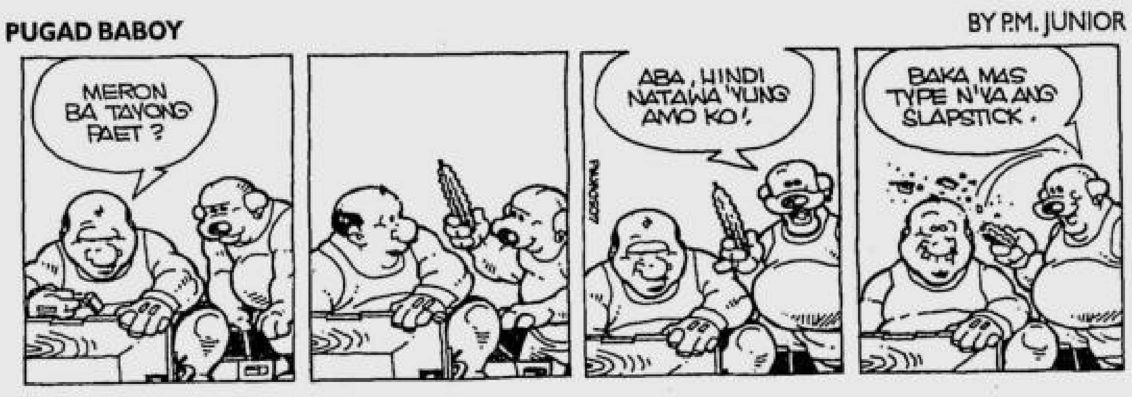
**BABY BLUES**

BY JERRY SCOTT


SUGAR
ACCORDING TO THE BOX, THEY'LL GET LESS SUGAR THIS WAY THAN IF THEY EAT THE ACTUAL CEREAL.
CHOC CROC

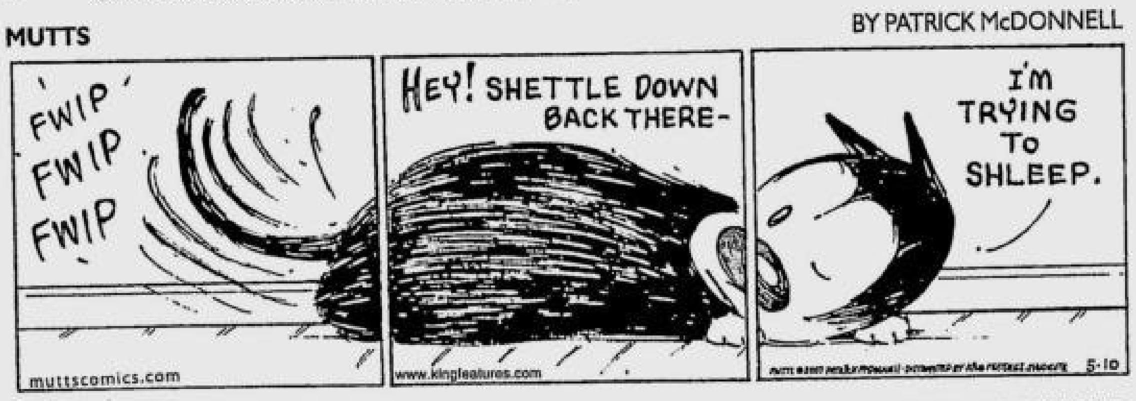
**PUGAD BABOY**

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MERON BA TAYONG PAET ?
ABA, HINDI NATAWA 'YUNG AMO KO!.
BAKA MAS TYPE N'YA ANG SLAPSTICK.

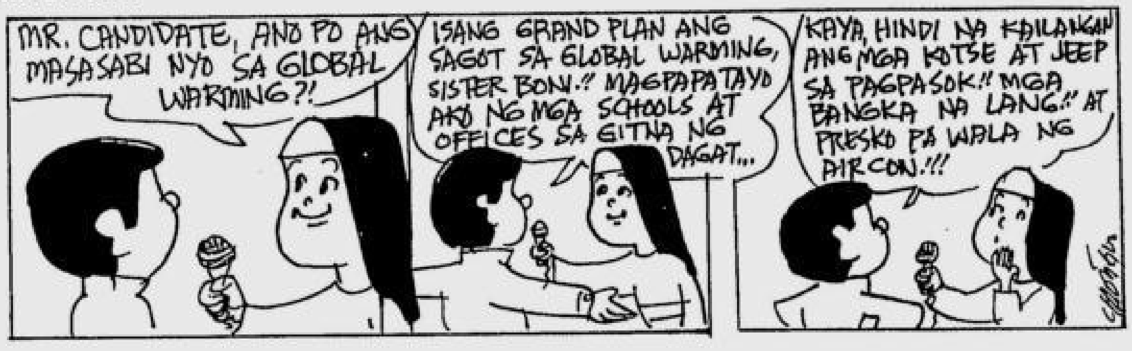
**MUTTS**

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


FWIP FWIP FWIP
HEY! SHETTLE DOWN BACK THERE-
I'M TRYING TO SHLEEP.
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
5-10

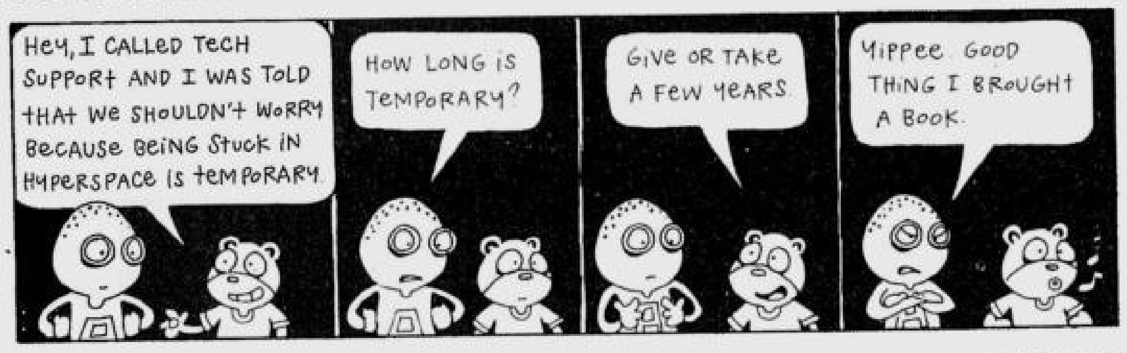
**LOVEKNOTS**

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MR. CANDIDATE, ANO PO ANG MASASABI NYO SA GLOBAL WARMING?!
ISANG GRAND PLAN ANG SAGOT SA GLOBAL WARMING, SISTER BONI.!! MAGPAPATAYO AKO NG MGA SCHOOLS AT OFFICES SA GITNA NG DAGAT...
KAYA, HINDI NA KAILANGAN ANG MGA KOTSE AT JEEP SA PAGPASOK!! MGA BANGKA NA LANG!! AT PRESKO PA WALA NG AIRCON.!!!

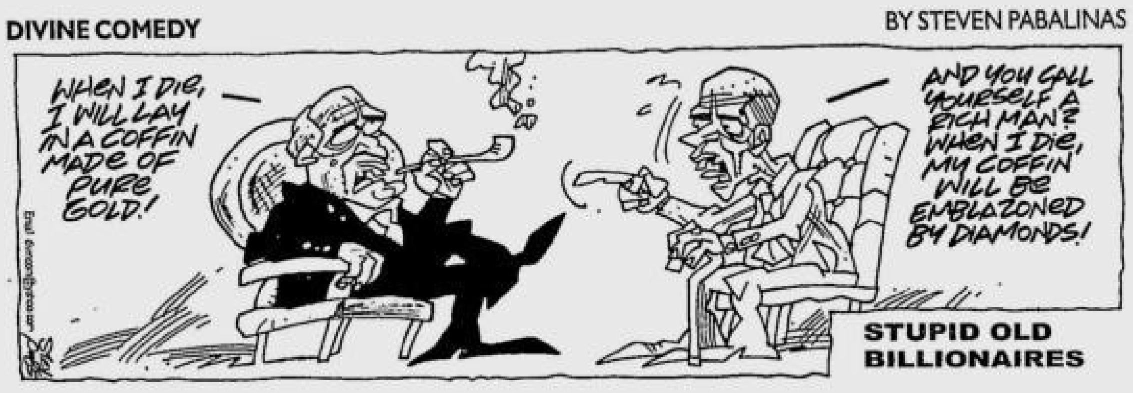
**ATOMO AND WEBOY**

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, I CALLED TECH SUPPORT AND I WAS TOLD THAT WE SHOULDN'T WORRY BECAUSE BEING STUCK IN HYPERSPACE IS TEMPORARY.
HOW LONG IS TEMPORARY?
GIVE OR TAKE A FEW YEARS.
YIPPEE. GOOD THING I BROUGHT A BOOK.

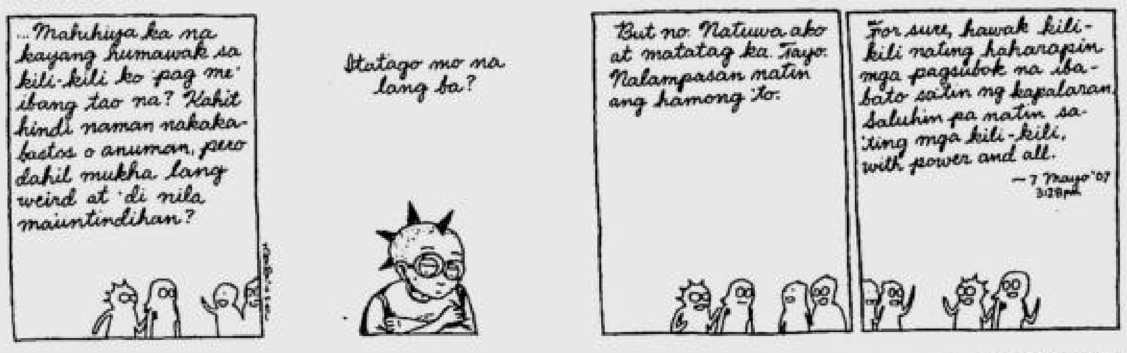
**DIVINE COMEDY**

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


WHEN I DIE, I WILL LAY IN A COFFIN MADE OF PURE GOLD!
AND YOU CALL YOURSELF A RICH MAN? WHEN I DIE, MY COFFIN WILL BE EMBLAZONED BY DIAMONDS!
STUPID OLD BILLIONAIRES

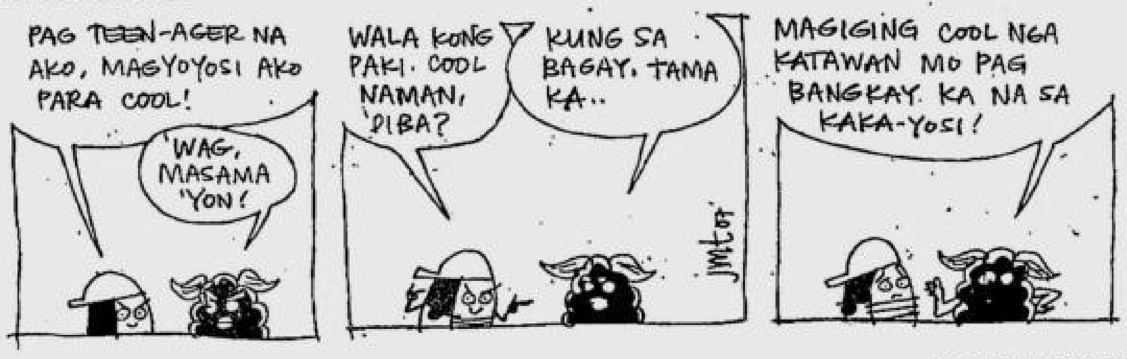
**KIKO MACHINE**

BY MANIX ABRERA


...Mahihiya ka na kayang humawak sa kili-kili ko 'pag me' ibang tao na? Kahit hindi naman nakakabastos o anuman, pero dahil mukha lang weird at 'di nila maiuntindihan?
Itatago mo na lang ba?
But no. Natuwa ako at matatag ka. Tayo. Nalampasan natin ang hamong 'to.
For sure, hawak kili-kili nating haharapin mga pagsubok na ibabato satin ng kapalaran. Saluhin pa natin sa-'ting mga kili-kili, with power and all.
—7 Mayo '07 3:28pm

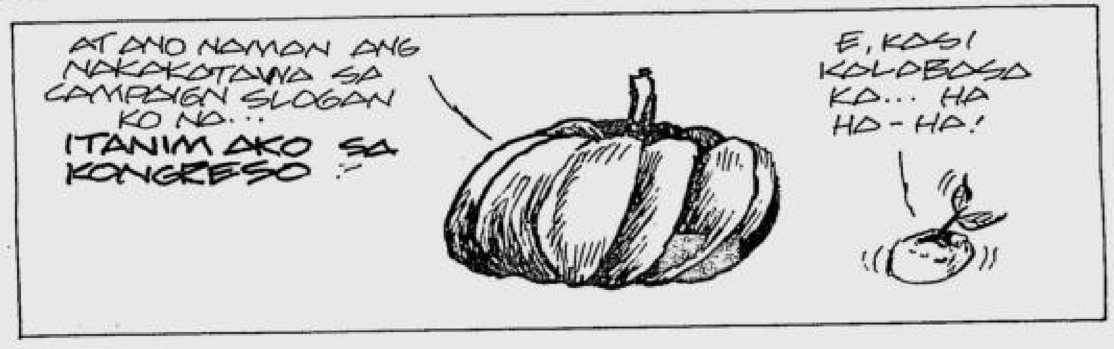
**MIKROKOSMOS**

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PAG TEEN-AGER NA AKO, MAGYOYOSI AKO PARA COOL!
'WAG, MASAMA 'YON!
WALA KONG PAKI. COOL NAMAN, 'DIBA?
KUNG SA BAGAY, TAMA KA..
MAGIGING COOL NGA KATAWAN MO PAG BANGKAY KA NA SA KAKA-YOSI!

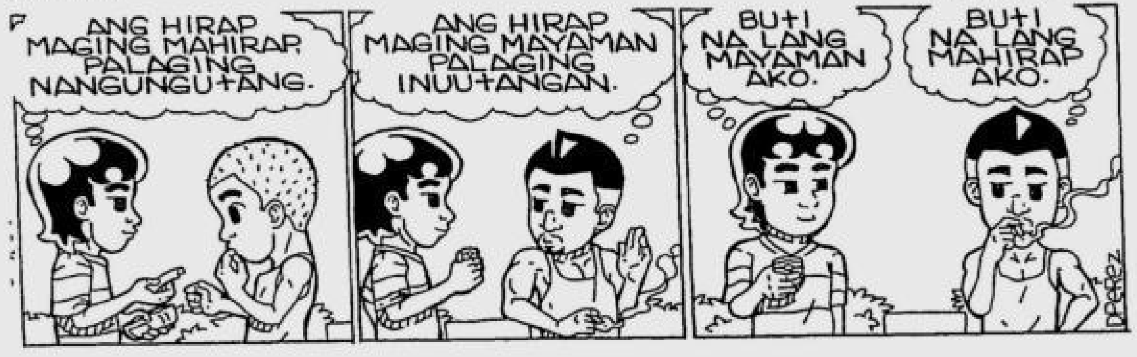
**TULDOK**

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


AT ANO NAMAN ANG NAKAKOTAWA SA CAMPAIGN SLOGAN KO NA... ITANIM AKO SA KONGRESO?
E, KASI KALABASA KA... HA HA-HA!

**SALAMIN**

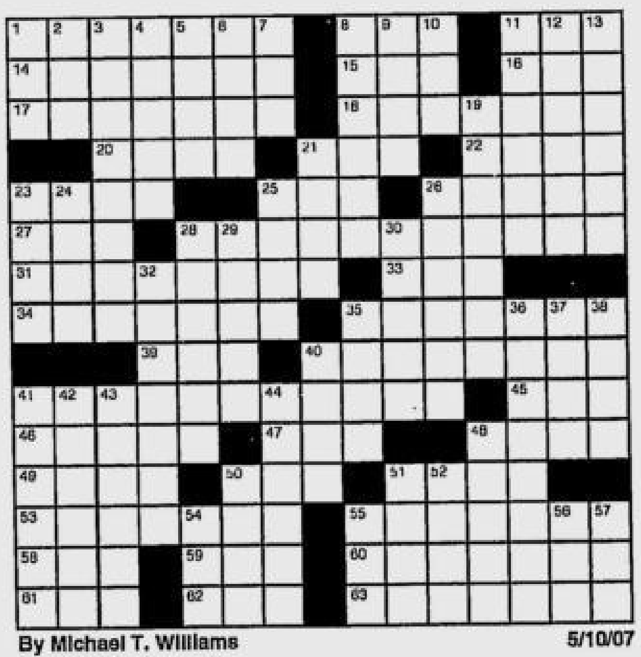
BY DARWIN PEREZ


ANG HIRAP MAGING MAHIRAP. PALAGING NANGUNGUTANG.
ANG HIRAP MAGING MAYAMAN PALAGING INUUTANGAN.
BUTI NA LANG MAYAMAN AKO.
BUTI NA LANG MAHIRAP AKO.
DPEREZ

## DAILY CROSSWORD

**ACROSS**
1 Actress Dietrich
8 Puncture sound
11 '60s radicals
14 Fainted
15 Marksman
16 Sushi fish
17 Start of a Napoleon Bonaparte quote
18 Dream
20 Tight closure
21 Take the odds
22 "Rolie Polie__"
23 Allows to
25 Director Craven
26 Milky gems
27 Language suffix
28 Part 2 of quote
31 Missiles' payload
33 Coll. Bulldogs
34 Renders harmless
35 Tracy of "Boys Town"
39 Gun lobby initials
40 Western hats
41 Part 3 of quote
45 11
46 Halloween ride?
47 Emulate Ali
48 M. Clouseau, e.g.
49 Sprinkle after a shower
50 Feel lousy
51 Polo of "Meet the Parents"
53 Stops sleeping
55 End of quote
58 End of a bus.?
59 Goddess of folly
60 Most meager
61 Comic Louis
62 Shakespearean contraction
63 Maintains

**DOWN**
1 NYC arena
2 Pointed tool
3 Barnyard strutters
4 Mythologies
5 New Age singer
6 Singer Young
7 Begley and Meese
8 Best of the bets
9 Jazz singing
10 Change for yen
11 Marine facility
12 Arnaz-Ball production co.
13 Crafty to the max
19 Aerial aces
21 Some buzzers
23 Wanton
24 Morales of "N.Y.P.D. Blue"
25 Marries
26 Starts
28 Virginia college
29 Harry Truman's birthplace
30 Mile High Center architect
32 Herbie of jazz
35 Charon's river
36 One colluding
37 Son of Seth
38 Invitation letters
40 Sm. runway aircraft
41 Procure
42 Muscular
43 Consolation
44 Herons' kin
48 Actress Dunne
50 Opposed to
51 Sock ends
52 Historic periods
54 Chow down
55 Stetson U's state
56 NYC hrs.
57 Some NFL linemen


1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
14 15 16
17 18 19
20 21 22
23 24 25 26
27 28 29 30
31 32 33
34 35 36 37 38
39 40
41 42 43 44 45
46 47 48
49 50 51 52
53 54 55 56 57
58 59 60
61 62 63

By Michael T. Williams
Clearwater, FL

5/10/07

**Wednesday's Puzzle Solved**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| E | P | P | S | | O | R | C | A | | A | S | P | E | N |
| R | A | L | E | | M | A | L | I | | P | A | R | E | E |
| A | R | A | M | | E | T | O | N | | S | L | I | N | G |
| S | O | C | I | A | L | S | T | U | D | I | E | S | | |
| E | L | I | | R | E | O | | | O | S | M | O | S | E |
| R | E | D | A | C | T | | G | R | O | | | N | O | D |
| | | | S | A | T | O | R | I | | T | E | E | N | S |
| | P | L | A | N | E | G | E | O | M | E | T | R | Y | |
| E | L | O | P | E | | R | E | T | U | R | N | | | |
| R | E | N | | | N | E | T | | T | E | A | S | E | T |
| R | A | G | L | A | N | | | B | I | D | | O | N | O |
| | | H | O | M | E | E | C | O | N | O | M | I | C | S |
| S | C | O | P | E | | A | R | I | E | | E | R | A | S |
| S | O | R | E | N | | R | U | S | E | | L | E | S | E |
| T | E | N | D | S | | P | E | E | R | | D | E | E | D |

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5/10/07

## HOROSCOPE

**YOU BORN TODAY:** You're bold and daring. You love to try new things. Many of you have gifted, artistic talents. You have an excellent sense of timing, especially regarding promoting yourself. Always trust your intuition, because your instincts are excellent. You have much physical grace and charm. The year ahead will be wonderfully social and pleasant, especially for promoting partnerships!
**Birthdate of:** Paul "Bono" Hewson, singer; Fred Astaire, dancer/actor; Victoria Rowell, actress.

**ARIES (March 21 to April 19):** Unusual opportunities related to travel, publishing, the media or education are possible. These might also apply to medicine and the law. However, your window of opportunity is brief. Act quickly!

**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20):** Someone might want to give you something today or do a favor for you. You might also get approval for a loan from a bank. Whatever it is, act quickly if you want to take advantage of this.

**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20):** A close friend or partner might pleasantly surprise you today. However, it's also possible this person will unpleasantly surprise you. Whoops!

**CANCER (June 21 to July 22):** This is the year in which you can definitely improve your job scene. Now something might happen that is a sudden opportunity for you to do this. If this is the case, act quickly.

**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22):** A chance for a vacation, a flirtation, a creative artistic adventure or perhaps something related to sports or children can come your way now. Don't be afraid to say yes!

**VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22):** Surprising real estate opportunities or chances to expand your home or chances to expand your family are possible now. Your private life is truly blessed at this time.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22):** You're full of marvelous ideas. Life is exciting now because short trips, opportunities to read, write and study, plus enjoyable times with siblings really turn your crank.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21):** You have some wonderful moneymaking opportunities right now. Stay tuned for ways to boost your income. It might involve travel or publishing.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21):** Some kind of good fortune could happen to you now. Uranus, the planet of surprises, is dancing with your ruler, lucky Jupiter. Lucky you!

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19):** Be careful you don't overestimate something you're hoping will happen. (Although, it's not in your nature to do this.) However, expect good things to happen.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18):** Friends and groups are eager to see you. This is definitely a popular year for you. Don't get exhausted trying to keep up with everyone.

**PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20):** Most of you are getting your name out there in the public. People notice you now—and it's good. Expect to make strides in areas related to travel, publishing, education, the media and dealing with foreign countries.

## CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

**Conceptis Sudoku** by Dave Green

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | | | | | 2 | | | 6 |
| 2 | | | | | | | | 4 |
| | 3 | | 1 | 7 | | | 9 | |
| 1 | | | | | | 9 | | |
| | | 2 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 6 | | |
| | | 7 | | | | | | 8 |
| | 7 | | | 3 | 5 | | 4 | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | 9 |
| 6 | | | 7 | | | | | 1 |

Difficulty Level ★★★

5/10

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**HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU**

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

**Answer to previous puzzle**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 4 |
| 1 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 5 |
| 5 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| 6 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 1 |
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| 3 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 9 |
| 2 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 3 |
| 9 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 6 |

Difficulty Level ★★★

Said the marriage would last one year

# Annabelle saw it coming

RUFFA GUTIERREZ AND HER TURKISH husband Yilmaz Bektas have split up.

The couple sent this joint statement to the press on Tuesday:

"It is with much regret that Ruffa Gutierrez and Yilmaz Bektas announce their mutual decision to end their four years of marriage. Earnest and sincere efforts at saving their marriage have failed. It is to the best interest of Ruffa and Yilmaz, their children and respective families that such a decision to severe marital ties had to be made.

"All issues and formalities concerning the dissolution of the marriage shall be done in accordance with applicable laws in the most cordial, amicable and private way possible for the benefit of all concerned. Ruffa and Yilmaz will remain committed parents and continue to be friends as they live their separate lives. They ask for everyone's understanding and consideration in respecting the family's privacy during this most difficult time. No further statements will be issued."

ANNABELLE RAMA

## Jealous couple

Ruffa's mother, Annabel Rama, saw it coming.

In July, 2004, Rama was quoted in an INQUIRER report as saying she had given the marriage only one year to survive.

"I never expected them to stay together this long," Rama said (Ruffa and Yilmaz were married on March 25, 2003). "I have seen them fighting frequently."

She said the two were very jealous people. "Ruffa would be jealous about what she imagines to be another woman in Yilmaz's life. The same thing with Yilmaz."

But Rama said things calmed down between the couple when their first child, Lorin, was born.

## Gold or no gold?

Last year on June 23, without apparent provocation, Ruffa told INQUIRER Entertainment that, if their cross-cultural marriage crumbled, she would receive 50 kilos of gold from Yilmaz's family.

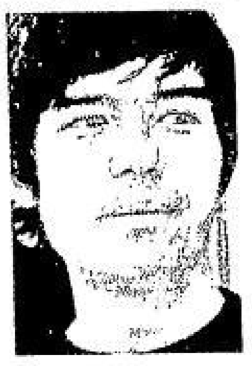
"We didn't have a pre-nup," Ruffa said. "But ... that's what we agreed on—for me to get 50 kilos of gold should we separate."

She later said, in another publication, that this was just "a joke."

But she confirmed her mother's observation, admitting, "There were problems in the beginning of our marriage. We would try to control each other long distance. Like I'm in London and he's in LA, and he would call me to tell me not to go out."

Aside from Lorin, 3, the couple have another daughter, Venice, 2. Ruffa said her husband was "dying to have a boy."

LJ REYES


CHAMP PIO

BIANCA KING

# LJ Reyes harassed by politician

**DOLLY WOOD**

*Dolly Anne Carvajal*

BIANCA KING AND HALE VOCALIST CHAMP were so sweet at the Embassy last week. Maybe they were just enjoying each other's company. Or is he the new king of Bianca's heart?

- **Alicia Mayer** was spotted in Nurture Spa (in Silang, Cavite) with a gorgeous American date. Are they nurturing special feelings for each other? Could he be the next **Joey Marquez** in Alicia's life?
- An insider told me that **Ara Mina** is badgering a Chinese tycoon based in Cebu (H.G.) to buy her house for P25 million. The tycoon is said to be smitten with Ara. She knows how to use her charms, huh? I wonder if how much he adores her exceeds how much her house costs. If the price or feeling is right ...
- **LJ Reyes** was traumatized after a sexual harassment incident she experienced in the hands of a councilor in Pampanga during a sortie. She laments, "His hands were all over me, in places he shouldn't be touching. I'm lucky to have gotten out of that in one piece. I'm not filing charges, but I don't want to see his face ever again." Not too long ago, she almost drowned during a shoot. She sighs, "I'd rather drown than be molested." A damsel in distress twice over!
- It was such a delight to be one of the jurors on GMA 7's "Showbiz Central" last Sunday. Thanks to **Pia**, **John**, **Raymond** and the staff for making **DJ Mo**, **Jun Lalin** and myself feel instantly at home. Here's an unsolicited advice to future guests in the show's hot seat segment: Don't give wishy-washy answers. You'll end up sounding like you are trying to convince yourself more than the jurors.
- We're sharing with you **Diether Ocampo**'s e-mail from LA. Diet is so into babies and kids. I always tease him that he should give his son **Dream** a playmate already.

ARA MINA

"Sweets, I'm in LA for the Silverspoon event—a trade show for baby clothing and kids' items. I interviewed some old schoolers ... **Jason Priestly** ("90210"), **Fred Savage** ("Wonder Years"), **Holly Robinson** ("21 Jump Street") and (super model) **Kylie Bax**. Then I'm off to San Diego to meet **Tony Hawk** (skateboard living legend). Pls check out our web site www.babycouturemag.com. Mwah! Diet"

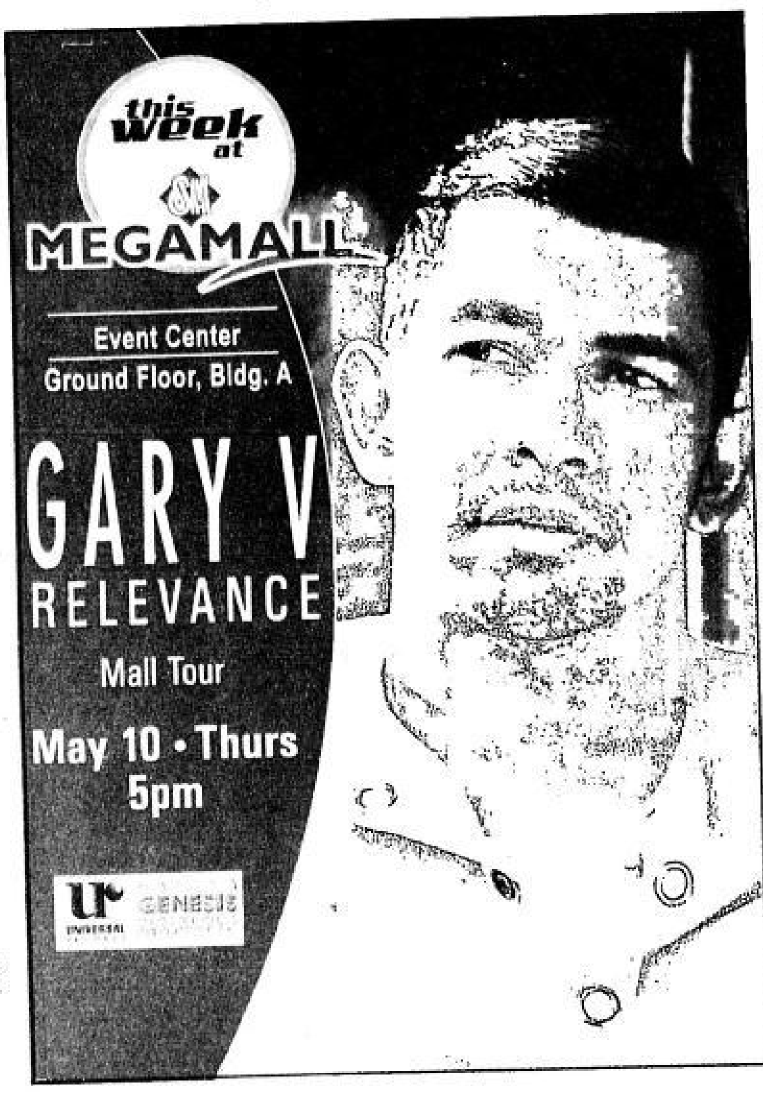
## Ugly no more

Ten semi-finalists in the one-of-a-kind nationwide search, "Miss Ugly (No More)" have been chosen. The women come from different backgrounds but share the same hope that physical transformation via the contest will come with a brighter future. The top three winners will undergo free surgical makeovers, dental and dermatological procedures at the Beverly Hills 6750 Cosmetic Surgery & Skin Institute.

## New album

Check out **Gino Padilla**'s new album "Hands of Time" (Mega Productions). It includes a duet with his cousin **Zsa-Zsa** ("Find That Child Hiding In You"), a rap song with **Francis M.** and **Rannie Raymundo** ("Sama-Sama") and the radio favorite "Keeping The Memories Alive." Gino is one underrated singer. He ought to be given more breaks. Enough of singers who just mouth the lyrics and have no "soul" in their singing. Let's have more hits from Gino, like his signature songs "Closer You and I" and "Let the Love Begin."

*E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com*


this week at
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Event Center
Ground Floor, Bldg. A
GARY V
RELEVANCE
Mall Tour
May 10 • Thurs
5pm
GENESIS

SHANG CINEPLEX
① SPIDER-MAN 3
MTRCB: GP
1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30
② SPIDER-MAN 3
MTRCB: GP
11:30, 2:30, 5:30, 8:30
③ 28 WEEKS LATER
MTRCB: R-13 12:20
2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 10:00
④ LUCKY YOU
MTRCB: PG-13
1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
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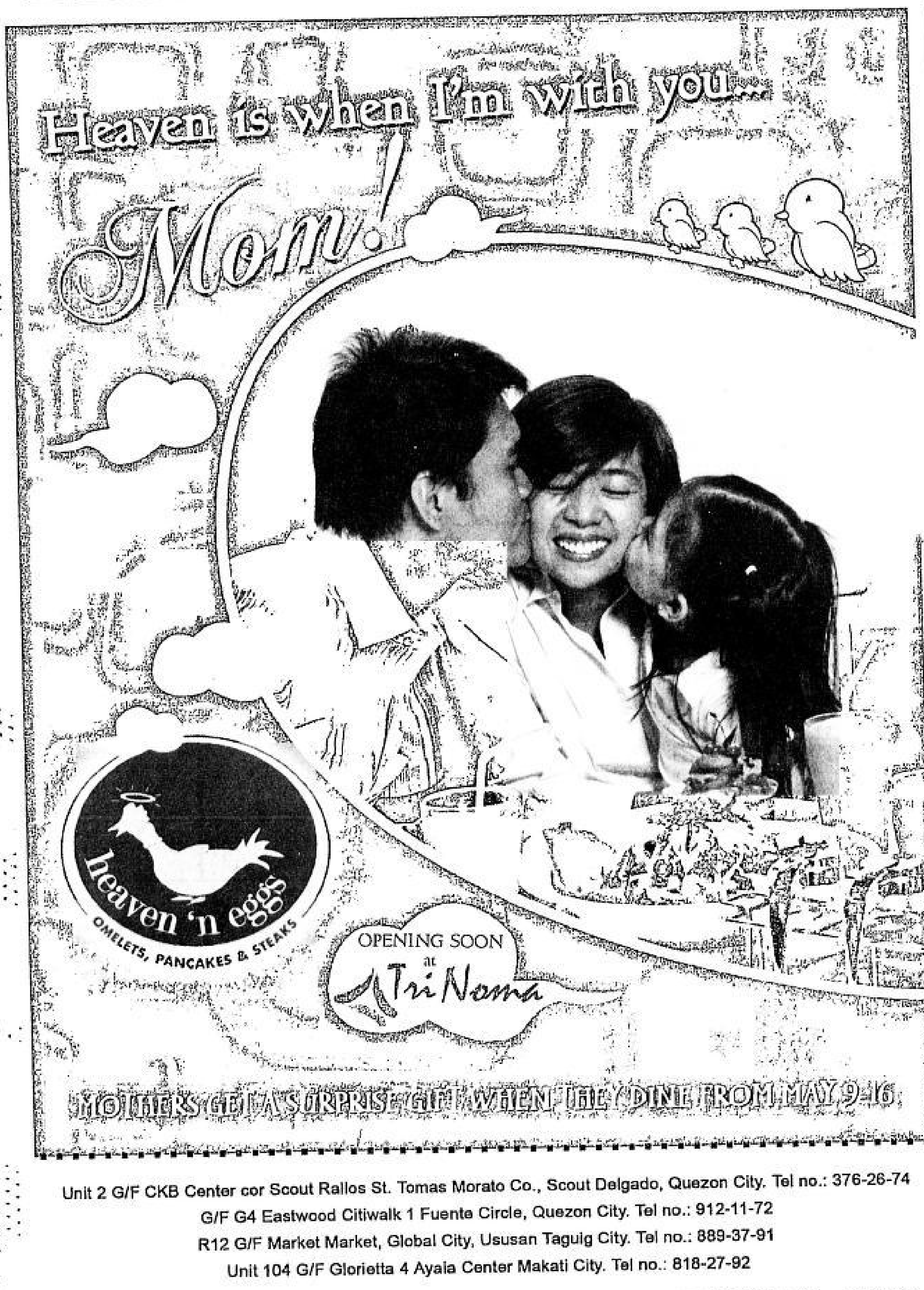
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